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The Great Oil Boom

OIL, THE FUEL OF THE FUTURE AND THE FORTUNE-BRINGER OF TO-DAY—THE RUSH FOR NEW OIL-FIELDS, THE RISE OF NEW OIL MAGNATES—A REMARKABLE CHAPTER OF INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL HISTORY

By Judson C. Welliver

"WE floated to victory on a flood of oil." Such was the diagnosis of the great war given in a single sentence by one of the leading statesmen of England, to emphasize the vital part in the struggle played by the liquid fuel which in recent years has become the very life of a fighting navy.

Now the world is by way of floating to fortune on pools of petroleum. The South Sea era hardly saw a more engrossing or more nearly universal scramble for fortunes quick and glittering than has come with the world-wide oil boom which has set in since the armistice was signed.

But this is no case of another South Sea Bubble. The world has found out how greatly it needs oil. The war taught it much about that. Its sadly depleted merchant marine will be restored largely with oil-burning steamers. Its navies will "coal" through big lines of hose, coupled

to reservoirs on the docks, and piping the fluid fuel into the ships' tanks without labor, grime, or waste of time.

The new science—or art, or craft, or industry, or whatever we may decide to call it—of aviation must have its petrol; must have it in millions of gallons, in peace as in war times, to an aggregate that no man yet dares estimate.

If the airplane is in its infancy—and who doubts it?—the motor-car, as a consumer of "gas," is but a husky and promising youngster. Six million automotive vehicles are said to be using gasoline in the United States alone, and others are being built at a rate which represents taking up the tale of capacity production where it was interrupted by the government's appropriation of the automobile factories for war services. Nor will it escape observation that no industry found demand and market more promptly awaiting it at the



WALTER C. TEAGLE, PRESIDENT OF THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF NEW JERSEY, THE PARENT COMPANY OF THE GREAT STANDARD OIL INTERESTS

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ending of hostilities than this of motor-car construction.

And so the ravenous market for oil shares, the insinuating demand for "straight tips," the daily and hourly organization of new companies, the unceas-

ing preparation of prospecting outfits to search for new fields of petroleum, is only a reflection of a world-wide, and, on the whole, a correct apprehension of the situation. If petroleum products proved themselves, in the last five years, absolutely

necessary to the conduct of war, they also won new recognition as absolute necessities in peace.

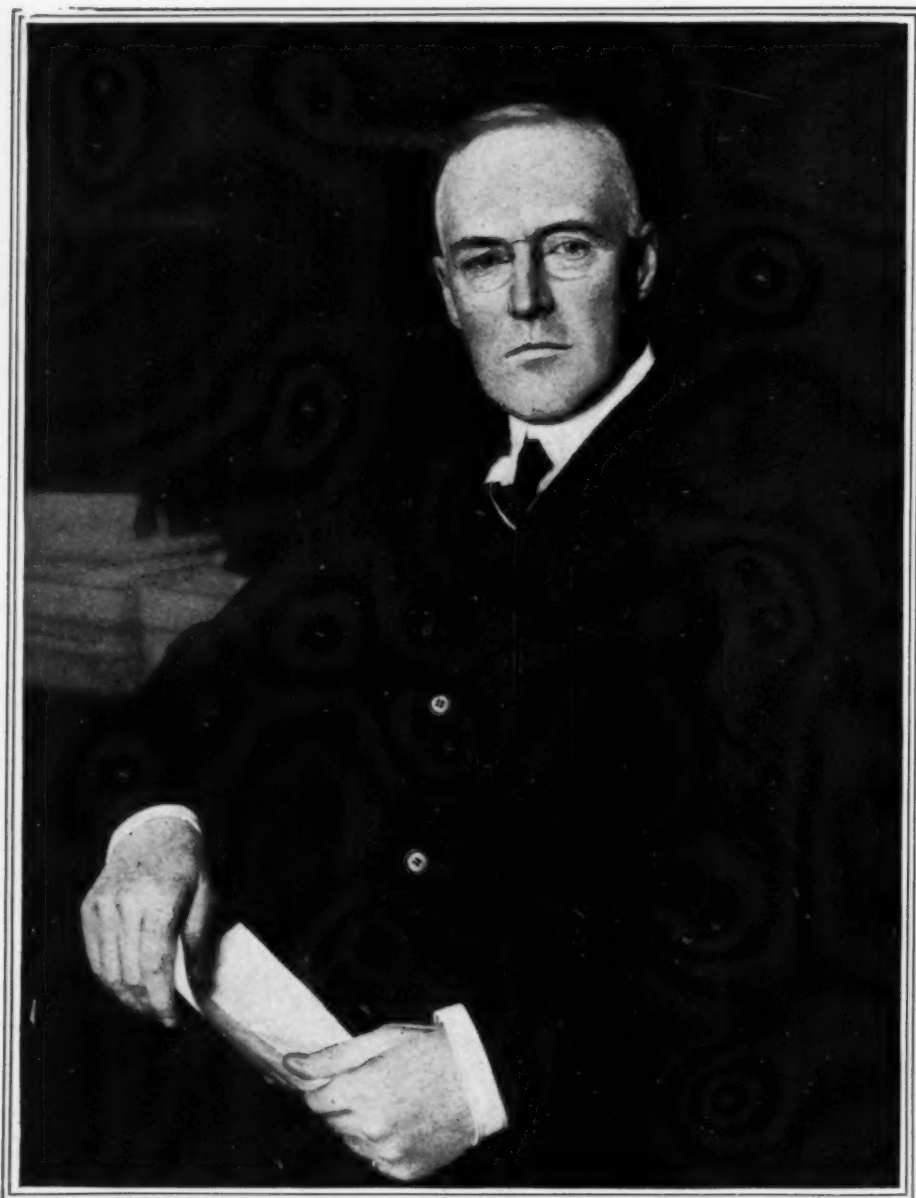
King Coal finds his crown resting uneasily on his head. He is an untidy and inefficient monarch at best, who gives us occasional scares by the recurring intima-

tion that his resources may at length be exhausted. If he is destined to be dethroned for a season by oil, and after that by the tides and waterfalls and flowing streams chained to the treadmill of industry and converting their perpetual energy into electric current, why, who will drop



WILLIAM P. COWAN, PRESIDENT OF THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF INDIANA, ONE OF THE LEADING STANDARD OIL CONCERNS

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A. C. BEDFORD, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF NEW JERSEY

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more than a single tear for a potentate who, after all, typifies the scurry and waste of the nineteenth century rather than the despatch and directness of the twentieth?

If you will go down into the financial district on the tip end of Manhattan Is-

land, and watch the surging multitudes crowding around the oil posts, buying and selling shares, dickering in prospects, exchanging bits of gossip that may represent either failure or fortune, you may imagine you are seeing the oil boom. But it will be



ROBERT D. BENSON, PRESIDENT OF THE TIDE WATER OIL COMPANY, AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE STANDARD GROUP

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a sorry mistake. You will be seeing only the surface indications, the secondary activities. To glimpse the real boom you must go out to the oil-fields of the world, known and unknown, developed or suspected.

You must realize that the greatest capitalistic and industrial groups everywhere are competing—or cooperating—with imperial governments for the domination of petroleum, wherever found. Just wait until some frost-bitten argonaut of the ant-

arctic comes back from a long exile in the polar continent with the announcement that he has "brought in" the greatest of gushers—and then watch the new and altruistic internationalism struggling with the old nationalism, while half a dozen governments brush up their shadowy claims that they saw it first, and are entitled to the usufruct!

The nations are short of food, and will be for some time. Very well; gas-driven tractors will plow new fields, four furrows or more at a clip, and save labor into the bargain.

The ocean hasn't the ships it needs, and must get faster service from those it has. All right, the new merchant marines of oil-burning steamships will make the turn-around quicker.

The railroads are unequal to the transportation burden heaped upon them; but the five-ton truck with a tankful of gasoline comes along as an auxiliary to lift the load.

The mails are too slow for these strenuous times, and passenger expresses require too many hours of busy men traveling about the world. So the mails are being sent by air—and gasoline—and hurried publicists travel between London and Paris by airplanes quite as a matter of course.

NO FEAR OF OVERPRODUCTION

During the great war, half the world rationed itself as to gasoline—or petrol, as the British call it—and curtailed the use of the liquid fuel for all but military activities. Yet, with all the enforced economies, this country in 1918 consumed or exported 26,453,485 barrels more of petroleum than it produced or imported. Putting it in terms of millions of barrels, we produced 341 and imported 38 during last year. Of this total supply 326 went to refineries and stills, 5 were exported, and 75 were consumed at home as fuel oil.

Fortunately there were large stocks on hand at the year's beginning, so it was possible to consume much more than was produced; but with the United States producing a good deal more than half the world's oil, and drawing heavily on its surplus stocks to meet the demands of the war, is it remarkable that there is a universal seeking for new sources of supply? They must be found.

Overproduction? That nightmare still haunts an occasional unimaginative ob-

server of the oil situation; but as a matter of fact, the world's consumption of petroleum products is destined to be measured for a long time, and probably always, by its production. Consumption is sure to outpace production. The most casual consideration of the increasing use of internal-combustion engines must convince anybody of this.

Everything made of petroleum is being consumed faster and faster year by year. That is true of lubricants, which must be increasingly used as machinery multiplies; of fuel; of kerosene for lights; of manifold by-products. The laboratories have turned out an inconceivable array of useful things from coal and petrol, humble staples that neither glitter nor glisten, but without which the world's wheels could not go round. The Kohinoor of a kingly crown is a senseless bauble beside the versatile talents stored in a barrel of petrol or a ton of coal!

The very life of nations, the persistence of civilization, have in the recent years of deadly strift been seen to depend on ample supplies of petroleum. "We floated to victory on a flood of oil." Aye, but how desperately they struggled and sacrificed to get that oil! England could go short of food, if there were no ships to bring it, but not of oil. She could, in a pinch, increase her home production of foods; but for oil she depended on sea-borne supplies. For many years, indeed, a small amount of petrol has been distilled from certain Scottish shales, and the output was much increased when war offered the premium of increased prices; but it was still only a drop in the bucket. Now they are seriously talking of devoting millions of pounds to a systematic boring campaign throughout the kingdom, to see if flowing wells cannot be found. One such is already reported, and the tight little island may look like a sieve before they get done with the experiment. They must have the oil if England is to remain mistress of the seas, if her flag is to go to every port, if her industries are to continue.

That is why the British government is giving so much attention to oil, anywhere and everywhere. It is an open secret that the Mesopotamian campaign was undertaken largely because it was vitally necessary to insure control of the oil-fields of southeastern Persia; and in the end, though the empire writhed at the disaster of Kut,



HENRY E. FELTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNION TANK LINE COMPANY, ANOTHER IMPORTANT STANDARD CONCERN

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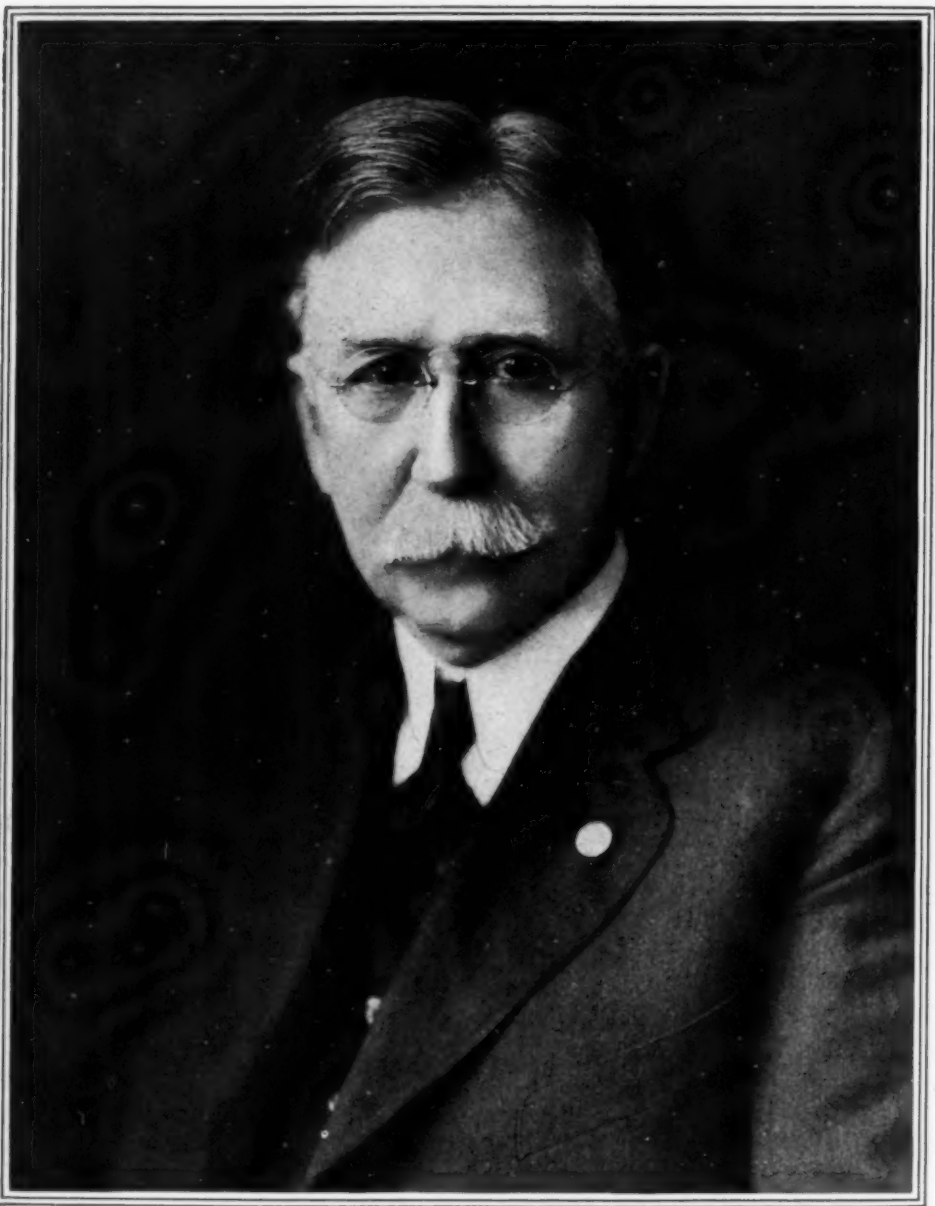
it won; for it came out mistress of the oil-fields hard by.

The Anglo-Persian Oil company is quite frankly a government-backed enterprise. But it is a modest undertaking compared to the Royal Dutch-Shell system, in which

the British government is understood to be taking an active interest.

TWO GREAT WORLD COMPANIES

This brings us to a consideration of the international, almost the supernational, as-



EDWARD L. DOHENY, PRESIDENT OF THE MEXICAN PETROLEUM COMPANY, WHICH OWNS OR CONTROLS
NEARLY A MILLION ACRES OF OIL LANDS IN MEXICO

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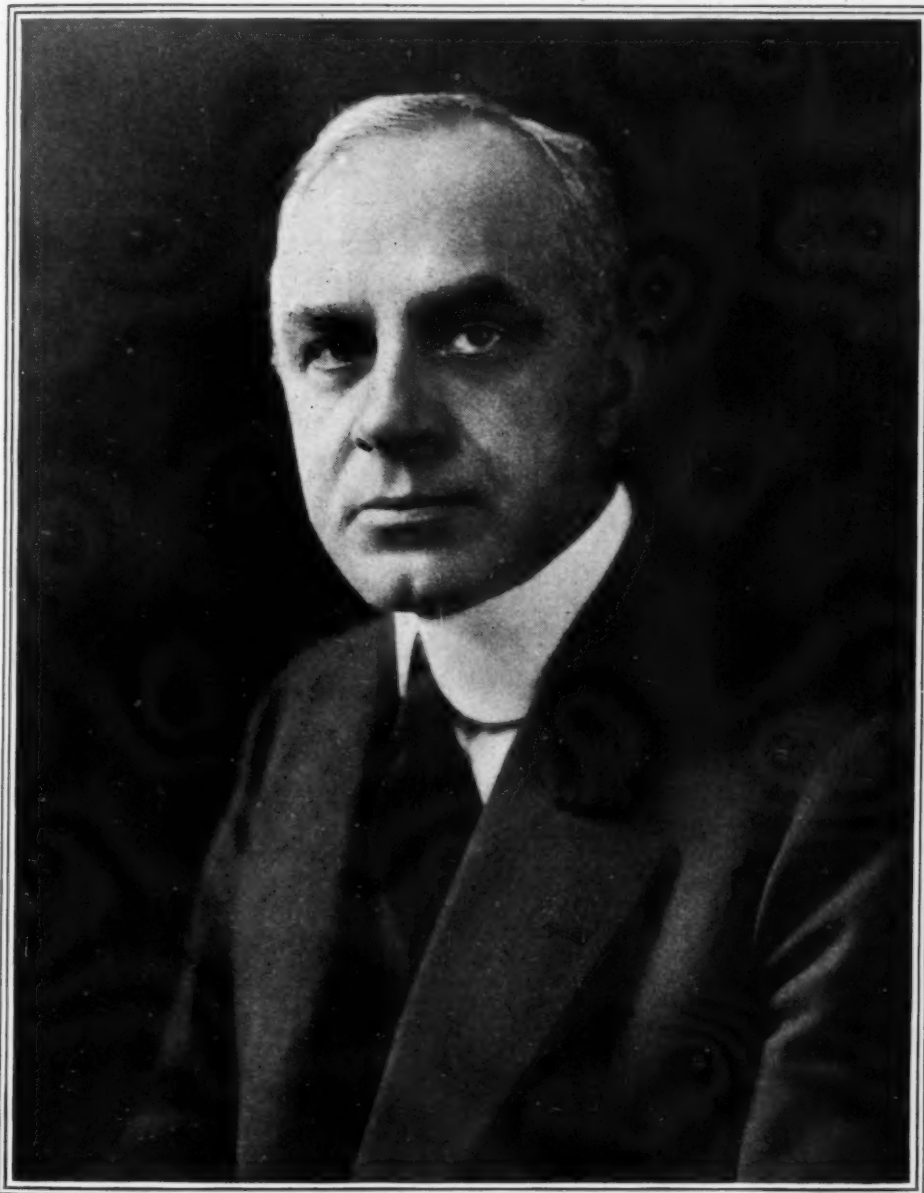
pects of oil. One reason why Germany lost the war was that she had failed, with all her boasted foresight, to recognize the importance of oil as a munition. There were two great world-reaching interests in oil, the Standard of the United States and the

Royal Dutch-Shell. The former was the largest purveyor of oil to Germany. The blockade shut off most of her supplies, leaving her dependent on the Austrian wells in Galicia and on what little she could get from Roumania; and both the Standard

and the Dutch-Shell streams were turned to supplying Britain and her allies. The British held control of the transportation system through which the Royal Dutch handled its oils, derived chiefly from the East Indies; and there began, apparently, the process of absorption which, after the

war was ended, reached its consummation in the announcement that the English government was closely associated with the Dutch interests.

There has never been a full explanation of what happened, but the cables brought the statement that the London government



E. C. LUFKIN, PRESIDENT OF THE TEXAS COMPANY, A GREAT REFINING AND SHIPPING ORGANIZATION
WHOSE CHIEF INTERESTS ARE IN TEXAS AND OKLAHOMA

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had secured virtual control of the system. The name of Rothschild has always been the special magic in connection with Royal Dutch, just as Rockefeller has been the guarantee of first-rate efficiency and unlimited resources back of Standard Oil. Whether the British government actually bought shares in the Dutch company, as Disraeli purchased the Khedive Ismail's interest in the Suez Canal, it is not necessary to discuss; somehow the interest passed to Downing Street control, where it had been, sympathetically and practically, throughout the war. And in gaining this control, Britain has secured the reins over the most wide-flung oil-producing and oil-marketing organization in the world.

The Dutch-Shell is producer, refiner, and distributor, while Standard Oil's policy has never been to engage largely in production. It has left that largely to individual enterprise and initiative, contenting itself with domination through its pipe-lines, tank-cars, and ships, its refineries and its wonderful wholesale and retail marketing system. The Dutch syndicate based its career on a big Borneo field, and expanded into Java, Sumatra, and British India. Before the war it had a quarter of the production of Roumania, and was strong in Russia, Persia, and the United States. The Standard, the Germans, and British interests were also in Roumania.

AN INVASION OF THE UNITED STATES

American power and prestige seemed, in the beginning, too great for any competition to meet. But the world is a large realm. The Dutch people felt themselves under the necessity of carrying the war into the enemy's country, and through subsidiaries which they controlled in the United States they set about gathering in producing territory. They even sent foreign oil to this country and sold it in competition with the American product. Talk about carrying coals to Newcastle! America was then producing about sixty per cent of the world's oil.

Dutch-Shell interests, through the Roxana Oil company, have invaded the mid-continent, Texas, and Mexican fields. They operate a railroad from the refining port of Tampico back into the hinterland, where they have a great acreage of oil-bearing lands, the development of which will presently make them a still more important factor in Mexico. In Colombia

and Venezuela the Dutch have turned up at the beginnings of development, and it is strongly intimated that they will direct the development of the Persian fields in behalf of the British owners.

At one point the Dutch company failed. Its power had grown until it was viewed with concern by many people in Holland, and when it tried to gain control of the rich Palembang fields in Sumatra, Dutch East Indies, the home government interposed. According to the best geological authority that oil-bearing region covers some two million acres, and the government at The Hague decided, after receiving most attractive bids from both Standard Oil and the Dutch-Shell, to keep it as a national oil reserve. Its status seems to be similar to that of the great California and Wyoming naval oil reserves that this country has set aside.

How long it will be before the wells of Roumania and Russia will again be available as contributors to the world's supplies, nobody can yet guess. The great Russian field at Baku is declining in productiveness, but there are others in the Caucasus which, when Russia and Turkey are once settled under stable governments, may be developed as never before.

The United States was turning out almost two-thirds of the world's petroleum when the war began; Russia, a little over one-fourth. The Russian supply fell off, while that of Mexico increased. War demands became such that toward the end of the struggle the nations associated with us were actually taking more gasoline from us than we were producing. The device of gasolineless Sundays, which produced excellent results in economizing gasoline here, was extremely mild compared to measures employed in Europe to restrict civilian consumption. A friend in London told the writer that his gasoline allowance for a family car was thirty gallons in six months, and that it cost him seventy-eight cents a gallon. The vehicles, air and road, that were used for war transport will not be idle in peace; they will be kept at work, because their transport capacity will be needed, and those that were laid up during the war will be back in service as soon as fuel is released for them.

MEXICO'S WEALTH IN OIL

The war hoisted prices of crude oil and gave an impetus to new explorations and



H. M. BLACKMER, PRESIDENT OF THE MIDWEST REFINING COMPANY, AN IMPORTANT CONCERN WHICH IS THE LARGEST OPERATOR IN THE WYOMING FIELDS

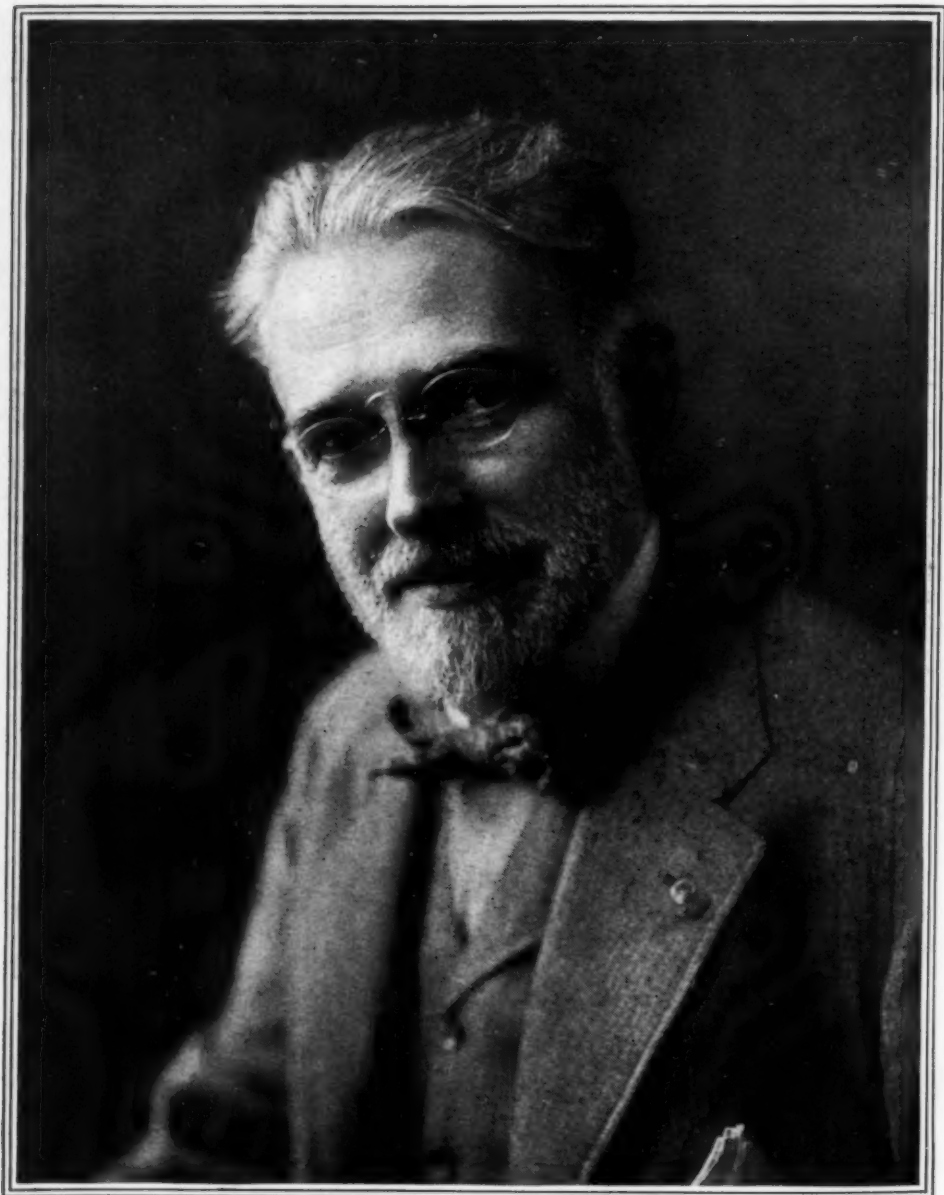
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developments. In all this the United States led the world, and it is likely to hold its lead for a long time, because industrial and financial conditions favor it. But there will also be great developments in Mexico, unless political conditions there grow much worse. That country is every-

where regarded as one of the oil bonanzas of the world. It may one day justify the judgment of enthusiasts who insist that it has as great a producing capacity as the United States, though its oil is not of the high quality that comes from our mid-continent and older Eastern fields.

In 1918 the Mexican Eagle Oil Company controlled about one-third of Mexico's product, according to trade authorities; and Mexican Eagle has lately become affiliated with the Dutch interests. The Doheny forces, under the lead of Edward L. Doheny and Mexican Petroleum, are

credited with about another third of the Mexican out-turn. English interests in Mexico, headed by Lord Cowdray, have long enjoyed the particular good-will of the Foreign Office in London; and with British control of the Dutch-Shell accomplished, it is assumed in oil circles that



HENRY L. DOHERTY, PRESIDENT OF THE CITIES SERVICE COMPANY, A PUBLIC UTILITY CONCERN
WHICH IS ALSO A LARGE PRODUCER OF OIL

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J. S. COSDEN, PRESIDENT OF COSDEN & CO. AND OF THE COSDEN OIL AND GAS COMPANY, TWO ASSOCIATED CONCERNS WHICH ARE LARGE OPERATORS IN OKLAHOMA AND ELSEWHERE

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British hands are likely to be strengthened in that quarter by a still more vigorous demonstration of the friendly interest of the diplomats.

The Dutch-British forces are also producing in Oklahoma, Texas, and California; they have a pipe-line from Oklahoma

to East St. Louis, and a refinery at the latter place. On the other hand, the American Carib Syndicate is in control of a considerable production in Colombia, and is doing development work to increase it; while the Atlantic Gulf Oil Company, considered a subsidiary of the Atlantic, Gulf

and West Indies Steamship Company, is working on lands in the Tepetate district, state of Vera Cruz, Mexico.

It would require a volume to give a view of the world-ranging oil movement that is now in full swing. Fortunes are being made, and others lost, in all corners of the world. If the possibility of overproduction be still entertained, it may be observed that the policy of the best-informed interests in the business, the great refining and marketing companies, does not suggest such a fear on their part. With about five hundred oil refineries in this country, new ones are being built or planned which will increase refining capacity fully thirty per cent. It is said that in the fields of northern Texas, lately opened and just now the most sensational thing in all the domain of oil, forty-two new refineries are in course of construction. They will be in the region from Fort Worth and Dallas, westward to and beyond the Ranger district.

THE WONDERFUL RANGER OIL-FIELD

The romance of this new north Texas field has been the sensation of the oil world this year. Already, though development is in its early stages, oil men are confident that ultimately there will be a production equaling or surpassing that of the great Cushing field of Oklahoma, which was the world's oil climax in its time. At the peak of productiveness it turned out three hundred thousand barrels a day of the highest-grade oil, and though it has fallen far from that figure, it is still a large producer. The new Ranger field in northern Texas is believed to cover a much wider area, turns out an oil comparable for content of gasoline and lubricating material with that of Cushing, and in its comparatively early stages of development was credited with a daily output of one hundred and sixty thousand barrels.

Ranger was a depot and side-track on the Texas and Pacific Railroad, a pathetic point of wind-swept loneliness in the midst of a flat, endless prairie of desolate solitude. That was a little over a year ago. The Texas and Pacific road was as sad an affair as the "town" of Ranger. It was a line with a long-establish record of hard luck. It ran west by southwest across the State of Texas, from Texarkana, through Dallas and Fort Worth, thence out into the vast spaces of the old "range country"—clear across the State, to nowhere in par-

ticular, by way of no place especially. Its manifest destiny seemed to be perpetual receivership.

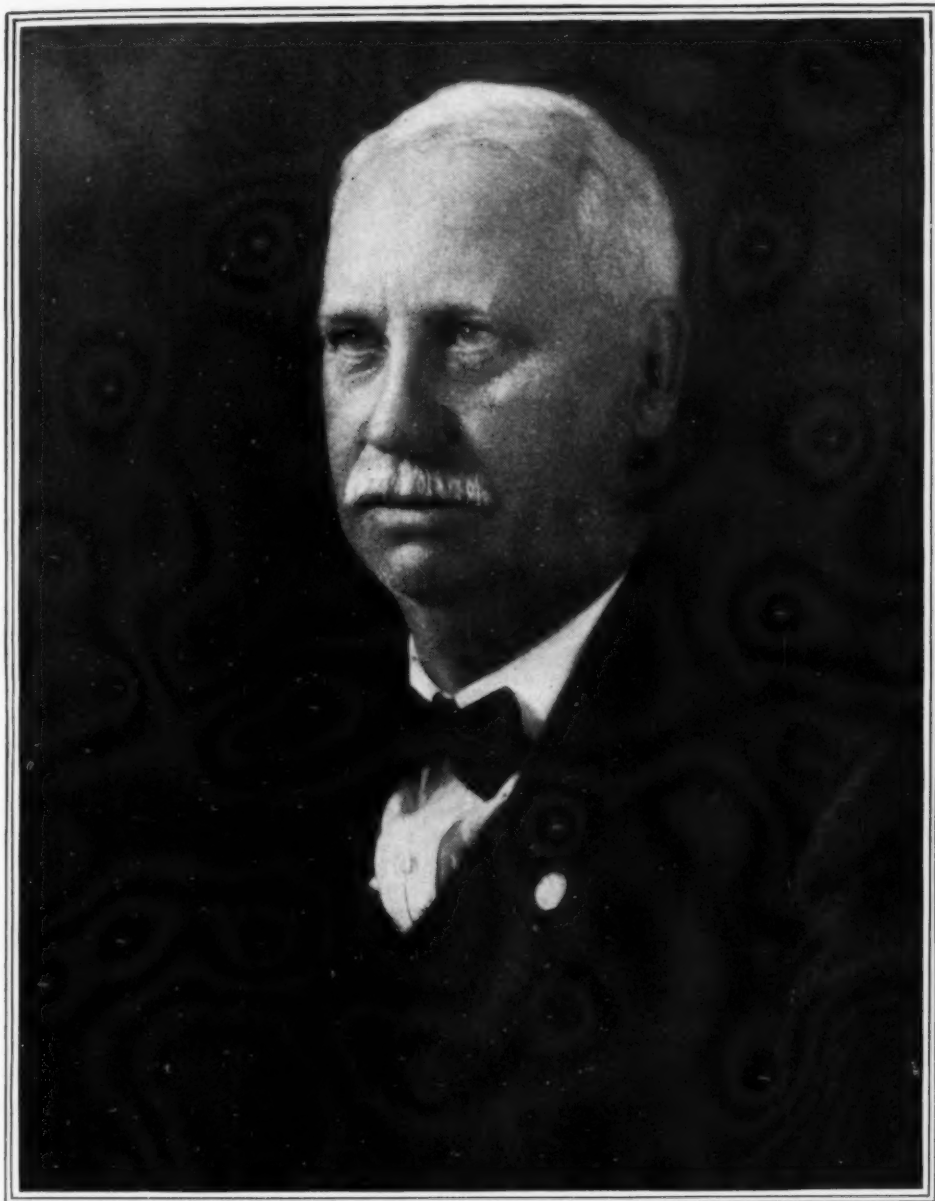
But there was one man of clear sight, confidence, and courage, who believed in that vast desolation; believed there was oil under it. He was Edgar L. Marston, of New York, president of the Texas and Pacific Coal and Oil Company. Despite the similarity of names, there is no connection between the two corporations. Marston's company had been operating some mines in a modest way, and through geological and prospecting reports he became increasingly certain that he was right about the oil. He put his personal credit back of his company, prospected, bored, gathered up lands in fee and under lease, and fought his way toward the goal that he was sure would finally be reached.

His reward came on October 17, 1917, when the "discovery well" began to flow. It was the McClesky Well—a name destined to fame in oil history—at Ranger. The drill had gone down more than three thousand feet before anything had happened; then a copious outflow of gas was developed, significant as indicating the proximity of oil. At three thousand four hundred and fifty feet oil was struck. It began flowing at the rate of four hundred barrels a day, and this was at the first contact with the oil-bearing sand stratum. The drill went farther down, and the flow increased to fifteen hundred barrels a day.

To all the world of oil, on both sides of the ocean, word was flashed that a new field had been tapped. There ensued a rush comparable only to those of the Argonauts to California or the Klondike. Marston and his associates, among whom E. C. Converse of New York has been a leader, had entrenched themselves in advance, gathering to themselves control of a great area of promising lands. Now they are said to hold some seventy thousand acres in fee, and thrice as much more under leases.

A BONANZA FOR A BANKRUPT RAILROAD

Perhaps no more impressive idea can be given of the development in this field than to tell what it has done for the Texas and Pacific Railroad. The movement of people and supplies into the new field, and of products out of it, gave the broken-backed line a new lease of life. It couldn't handle the business thrust upon it. The yards



JAMES C. DONNELL, PRESIDENT OF THE OHIO OIL COMPANY, AN IMPORTANT PRODUCING CONCERN THAT IS ONE OF THE STANDARD OIL GROUP

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and sidings were packed with traffic all the way back to Texarkana, and its congestion reminded one of that which afflicted the Eastern railroads in the winter of 1917-1918, when war freights were dammed up half-way from the coast to Buffalo and Pittsburgh.

The astonished railroad made a heroic effort to cope with the amazing prosperity that had been literally forced upon it. It has done so well that recently, though still in the hands of receivers, its stock has been selling on the exchanges above fifty dollars a share—its sudden rise from less than half

as much being wholly due to this oil development; for the company owns near-by lands in which other fields may still be located.

Ranger suddenly became a town, and then the metropolis of a region, whence prospecting outfits scattered themselves through the whole adjacent country. Derricks were hoisted and drills set boring everywhere. It was not the sort of development that culminates on the instant, because these Texas wells are deep holes, which take time and cost real money; but the "discovery well" did not long have the honors to itself. The field was soon a large producer, even while its full possibilities were apparently hardly touched.

Ranger is in Eastland County, and the development of this immediate field already extends to several neighboring counties—counties, be it remembered, in imperial Texas, where a county is big enough to blanket some States. The town itself grew from practically nothing to five thousand, ten thousand people almost before it could rub its eyes. No telling how many it has now, but it is getting to be a city just as fast as these Southwestern *Aladdins* of overnight metropolis-building can make it one.

A ROMANCE OF MILLIONS

What happened to Mr. Marston's Texas and Pacific Coal and Oil Company tells a story even more eloquent than that of the railroad with the parallel name. Three years ago the concern had \$3,000,000 capital, increased later to \$4,000,000, and then to \$5,000,000. At \$4,000,000 capitalization its stock was quoted around 125, giving the properties a market valuation of \$5,000,000. In May, 1919, with \$5,000,000 capitalization, the stock was selling around \$2,150; that is, the market valuation had risen to \$107,500,000. Oil authorities insist that this estimate is moderate; that the properties are now realizing \$2,000,000 monthly from gross sales, and are reasonably worth \$150,000,000.

Rumor is always busy with the gigantic possibilities of deals and combinations in oil, especially when new fields are involved. It has been persistently reported that the Dutch-Shell interests have tried to secure control of the Texas and Pacific Coal and Oil Company, and that the latter has declined to sell out because its owners were not willing to turn it over to foreign con-

trol. The same Anglo-Dutch forces have been reported as endeavoring to gain control of the Mexican oil properties of Edward L. Doheny and the Mexican Petroleum group. Mr. Doheny's trip to Paris, while the peace congress was sitting, at a time when the world was full of tales of big and bigger combinations and sensations pending in the international oil realm, was an affair of mysterious concern to the whole petroleum world.

OLDER OIL-FIELDS STILL ACTIVE

While Texas has been far in the front of recent American oil movements, it has not had the game to itself. The older regions of the Appalachians are being culled over, and production, from old and new borings, is increasing under the inspiration of higher prices. In West Virginia a new section of this oldest field is developing fast. It is said that West Virginia oil is the world's richest in those particular constituents that just now are most demanded—gasoline and lubricants; richer even than the Cushing flows.

Nobody predicts that the West Virginia fields will ever produce on the scale of the mid-continent gushers, but they are plainly destined to great expansion and a long process of development. One concern, the Ohio Cities Gas Company, is credited with controlling more than two hundred thousand acres of oil prospects or developments in the State; it has a refinery at Charleston, as well as others in Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas. This company recently acquired control of the Pure Oil Company and the Quaker Oil Company, in one of those kaleidoscopic readjustments that nowadays are so common that nobody has time to be surprised.

Kansas, California, Wyoming, Kentucky, have all been uncovering new wealth in oil during recent months. Indeed, so nearly universal is the movement that it is dangerous to write of a situation existent today, lest to-morrow should change it. Kentucky development thus far has centered largely about Irvine, in Estill County. These Kentucky fields are very unlike those of Texas, in that drills need to be put down a comparatively short distance, while in north Texas they bore holes as much as a mile deep, costing forty or fifty thousand dollars, without seriously expecting results until that depth is reached or approached.



HARRY F. SINCLAIR, PRESIDENT OF THE SINCLAIR OIL AND REFINING CORPORATION, ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL OF THE NEWER OIL COMPANIES

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Oklahoma still remains the headquarters for big production of high-grade oil, despite the reduced production of the Cushing field. The State's prosperity, so far as oil is concerned, goes right on. When the Cushing field spouted three hundred thousand barrels a day, the fluid was worth

forty cents a barrel; now the flow is indeed only a fraction, but the price ranges around \$2.25 a barrel.

The Midwest Refining Company has been one of the sources of wealth for the fortunate who got in early. It is at present the largest operator in Wyoming, but the



MARK L. REQUA, FORMERLY HEAD OF THE OIL DIVISION OF THE UNITED STATES FUEL ADMINISTRATION, NOW ASSOCIATED WITH THE SINCLAIR OIL INTERESTS

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Ohio Oil Company, the Texas Company, and many smaller concerns, are also working there. Wyoming's supporters confidently expect it to rank, at the height of production, among the leading States. California, too, keeps right on uncovering new possibilities and larger production,

despite the withholding of great regions owing to legislative and administrative entanglements.

SMALL CHANCE FOR THE POOR MAN

Speaking generally, and with due allowance for exceptional cases, the present oil

boom is not a "Coal-Oil Johnny" affair. The big money is made by people who have money to make it with. The Street is full of stories of people turning nest-eggs into little fortunes in days or weeks or months, and some of these are true; but a vast majority of the small speculators will be losers, not winners. The great "killings" will all be made by men who dominate large developments in the field, or who handle the stock-market end of it on a great scale. The poor man of to-day doesn't drill a forty-thousand-dollar hole in the ground overnight and turn up a millionaire to-morrow. The business, like gold-mining, is organized, systematized, controlled by steady hands and heads, to an extent which a few decades ago would have seemed quite impossible.

But the names of many men lately appearing in the oil firmament tell of fortunes made fast, through skill or luck or the combination of both. Harry F. Sinclair, head of the Sinclair Oil and Refining Corporation, had ample capital of ambition, confidence, and enthusiasm when he started the career that has become a romance. He was in the White and Sinclair combination, ultimately buying out the White interests. He acquired properties in many fields, became a highly successful operator, and finally bought out the Milliken interests, built up by John T. Milliken through a career that was another romance of fortune-building.

Milliken was originally a chemist in St. Louis, went into oil, fought his way up, and became a great developer and producer. One day, traveling on a train, he had a telegram handed to him. It was from Sinclair, and it asked him to name a price on his oil holdings. Milliken fingered it, then turned to the friend with him.

"That would be ridiculous," he said. "Nobody else would imagine they were worth as much as they are to me."

His friend wasn't so sure of that.

"You must have a price," he suggested. "Why not name it? No harm if Sinclair thinks it's foolish."

Milliken wired that he would take ten million dollars, and forgot it; but not for long. Back came a two-word despatch from Sinclair.

"Offer accepted," it read.

The deal was closed, and Sinclair took over the Milliken holdings. If the price looked prohibitive to Milliken, it didn't to

the buyer; and the story goes that Sinclair made more out of them, after that, than Milliken had made before.

Milliken died a few months ago, and his executors found an estate of twenty million dollars.

THE BOOM IN OIL STOCKS

E. L. Doheny, head of the Mexican Petroleum Company, which is now one of the chief producing and speculative factors in Mexico, is a man of the fighting type. He had fought his way up, dealing with one revolution after another, one political estate and then another in Mexico, but always keeping his grip on the situation. The stock-exchange recorded Mexican Petroleum at 79 as its low point for 1918; recently it has sold above 200. Many are the stories told of fortunes made in this issue during its spectacular upward rocketing.

These market records run through the oil list generally. Comparing low quotations of some well-known stocks for last year with the figures they have touched during the oil boom of this year, here are some increases:

Atlantic Refining, from 888 to 1,425.

Continental Oil, from 390 to 710.

Ohio Cities Gas, from 35 $\frac{3}{8}$ to 59 $\frac{3}{4}$.

Ohio Oil, from 290 to 404.

Pierce Oil, from 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ to 28 $\frac{3}{8}$.

Prairie Oil and Gas, from 405 to 815.

Midwest Refining, from 97 to 196.

Texas and Pacific Coal and Oil, from 300 to 2,200.

Texas Company, from 136 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 292.

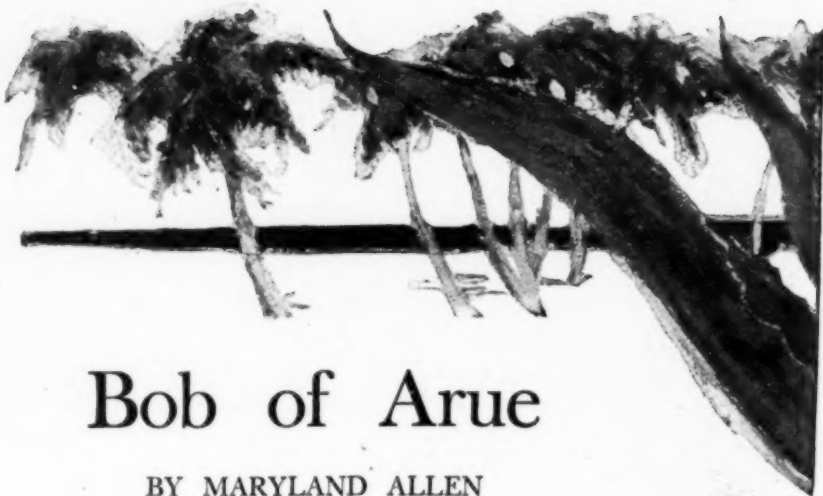
Sinclair Oil and Refining, from 25 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 69 $\frac{3}{4}$.

California Petroleum, from 12 to 36 $\frac{3}{4}$.

Associated Oil, from 54 to 96 $\frac{1}{4}$.

It isn't fair to pick out a few stocks and present such startling figures; but it is fair to say that there have been few market movements in which the bulls came nearer to having things all their own way. Companies which are finally discovered to represent water in the stock rather than oil in the ground, will, of course, at length crash down; but the whole tone and tendency of the times suggests a universal confidence that the property which stands for oil—real oil—decently managed and productive, is likely to continue good property. Behind it is the insistent and increasing demand of the whole world of transportation and industry.

A WOMAN'S
STRUGGLE
FOR LIFE,
LOVE, AND
HAPPINESS
IN THE
ISLANDS OF
THE SOUTH
SEAS



Bob of Arue

BY MARYLAND ALLEN

Illustrated by E. F. Ward

ON the island of Tahiti, in the district of Arue, twenty-five miles from Papeiti by way of the beach, an American bought thirty acres of land for a vanilla-plantation, and announced that he intended to settle down there with his wife and two little girls.

Harding, who is about the most successful vanilla-planter in the South Pacific, said it was a fine piece of land, a regular diamond-mine as far as concerned vanilla; but Conolly was not the man to raise and cure the bean. Conolly, Harding announced after a very short first interview—"William Kanter Conolly" was the way it appeared engraved upon a very neat card—was a worthless bounder and a yellow hound to boot. Captain Jim Winton, with whom Conolly traveled down in the Vahine—Mrs. Conolly and the two little girls came later in the Ourangi—confirmed Harding's heated statements and added a great many more of his own.

"Conolly suffers from an incurable disease," he concluded, and lit his small black pipe.

The men visiting him gave back a little. Incurable diseases and men who carry them are not popular in the South Seas.

"You may as well tell us what it is," said Harding, while the others waited rather breathlessly.

"Being William Kanter Conolly," drawled Winton in his pleasant English

voice. "There's no doubt he's had a good bit o' money, and has run through it, too."

"What in the name of Heaven does he expect to keep alive on down here?" cried Hudson, who always came over from Moorea to meet the mail.

"The price of green vanilla," replied Winton dryly.

"Green van—is any of that land in bearing vines?" inquired Hudson, turning to Harding.

"About one acre," said that pessimist gloomily. "Has any one seen his wife?"

"I have not," volunteered Captain Winton; "but I understand—"

He said no more, for Conolly twisted the brass ring in the door and entered without the ceremony of knocking. He had come to carry his friend, Captain Winton, to his plantation at Arue.

"Do you good, ol' man, to get out o' this—hup—dirty port!"

He had been drinking, but apparently not more than he could carry. Winton introduced him, there being nothing else for him to do; but he might have saved his manners for a better occasion. Conolly regarded the men with bland indifference.

"Get your traps," he said to the captain, "and let's kick out of here."

Winton went with him. Again it seemed he really had no choice. The men, in furious silence, ordered him to do so. There was only one more thing they wanted to



SHE CLEARED LAND, LITERALLY
INCH BY INCH

know about Conolly, and that was what manner of woman was the wife who had come to live with him at Arue, bringing with her two helpless little girls.

Winton followed him down the gangplank and through the sheds piled with sacks of malodorous copra, and loathed the swaggering, self-sufficient swine. On the other side of the sheds there waited the best hired motor available in Papeiti. So Conolly had not run through quite all of his money, or he knew how to get credit—which in the end was the same for him.

All the way out he talked volubly of his wonderful discovery. That sixty acres he'd bought was a regular — hup — gold-mine, richest land in the world!

"Since he's doubled the quantity of

land," thought Winton, sucking philosophically at his little old black pipe, "what's the odds about the richness?"

"The cured beans from that plantation 'll grade higher 'n beans from anywhere — hup — else in the worl'," orated Conolly. "By this time nex' year the French customs — hup — 'll pass the tins marked 'Arue' without inspection. I tell

you I know what I'm talking about!" he cried. "I'm a—hup—expert in vanilla-culture. I've been ex-experimenting all over the South Pacific for for-forty years!"

"Some time," thought Winton, smoking in calm silence, "I'll tell him it takes seven years for a vanilla-plantation to come into full bearing."

At last they turned off the road into pure jungle, following a way unskilfully slashed through the heavy tropical growth. It was very damp and marshy. The motor bumped and rolled violently with every revolution of the wheels; the black-and-tan chauffeur swore volubly in French and Tahitian that he would go no farther; but Conolly talked on.

"A beautiful shell road, now, right through this noble grove of coconut-palms straight to the—hup—mansion house. I'll have two hundred Chinamen working in here in no time. Right over there I've had the land staked out for a model settlement for 'em. Like to stick together, the—hup—devils! Over here the drying-sheds—"

The motor flung itself abandonedly into a deep hole, and Conolly's head narrowly missed going clear through the top.

"I'm having some blankets specially woven in New Zealand," he said genially. "One hundred bales of 'em — hup — for drying my Special Cure. Oh, I know how to make the beans worth their little weight in gold!"

The car shot violently into a half-hearted attempt at a clearing alongside a bright river that ran down, murmuring

melodiously, over the white beach, and lost itself in the placid lagoon, beyond which the breakers creamed and roared.

It was a beautiful place, wild and tropical, with huge hibiscus-trees along the river dropping their gold-and-magenta blossoms upon its placid bosom and sending them floating out to sea. It was jungly and tropical and lovely—Jim Winton conceded that; but the tumbledown shack, a misbegotten hybrid of ready-cut and native architecture, with a stained, ragged awning stretched saggingly in front in lieu of a veranda, was hardly the proper home for a white woman and two little girls.

Conolly stepped from the motor and strolled in the direction of the beach.

"The house, or rather—hup—the tiled portico, will come down this far," he said grandly. "Show you the plans after tiffin; paid three thousand dollars for them alone." He waved a large, well-kept, useless-looking hand. "Looks like I meant business, eh, Winton? Ah, so I do! Do you get me?"

His prominent blue eyes turned upon his guest with a shrewd, penetrating glare, and the captain nodded soberly.

He knew exactly what had brought Will Conolly to the island of Tahiti in the South Pacific; but the mystery of the wife and children was still his to seek. He knocked out his little black pipe and put it in the pocket of his white drill coat. Winton had a calm, strong way of awaiting events that was all his own. He did not propose to return to the Vahine and his friends in Papeiti until he had seen Conolly's family and discovered just what part was allotted to them in the game at Arue. For he felt, if he listened long enough, Conolly would tell him that, too.

"The rockery here," chatted his host genially. "Nothing—hup—but ferns. I've the largest private collection in the world."

A woman appeared in the doorless doorway of the house and advanced from beneath the ragged awning. She was tall, beautifully proportioned, and not too slender. Here all my women readers will put down the story disappointed; but the men will keep on, for a small, thin woman is a boy's dream that vanishes with maturity.

As she stood there in the slanting shadows of the clearing, Winton saw that her hair was brown and guessed that her eyes were gray. She looked too serene to be a clever woman—in the general acceptance of that term. He thought that in her the

stream of life ran deep and still, that she did not talk much, and smiled oftener than she laughed.

Her mouth was wide and generous, witty, provocative of kisses. She looked ready to smile, and yet, when she approached, the steady courage and knowledge in her wide-apart gray eyes seemed to imply that out of the depths of despair she had saved the right to be serene for some great and good reason.

She wore a blue cotton dress with a broad white collar, open at the neck, buttoned clear down the front and confined just above the waist-line by a loose belt. The trades had coaxed out some short hair at the smooth parting on her serene brow, and it blew about her face in little curls.

Jim Winton stared, and something sprouted in his breast that his small, fretful wife with all her narrow, fretful hopes and fears had never warmed there. It grew and burst into flower, and he loved this new woman as completely and enduringly as if the feeling had been the growth of years instead of seconds; and he knew, as men and women who live courageously and do not let life cheapen them do know, that he loved her for all his life to come.

She drew near, and Conolly noticed her much as he had noticed the men in Winton's room in the Vahine—which was not at all. Neither was she affected by this indifference. She put out her hand with a wonderful, compelling charm, to which Jim Winton would have completely surrendered if he had not done so the moment she stepped from under the awning. He likened her to Eve, and felt that life was nothing to him because he could not hold her in his arms.

"I know you are Captain Winton," she said. Her voice was contralto, as he knew it would be, and very sweet. "I want to thank you for being so kind to Will when he came down."

A queer look came into Jim Winton's cobalt eyes, and his tanned face flushed a deep red that vanished beneath the starched white collar of his coat. The Vahine was scarcely outside the Golden Gate when Will Conolly, having subsisted mainly upon champagne and cigarettes during the two weeks he spent in San Francisco, had succumbed to delirium tremens. Winton, being summoned by the doctor, who was somewhat incapacitated himself, knocked him down, administered a shot in the arm,

and locked Conolly up until such time as the ring-tailed purple lizards and pink spiders in sunbonnets retired and reason returned. And it was for this service that the most beautiful, most desirable woman in the world clasped his hand and thanked him with grateful, low-voiced sweetness!

He wondered if her thanks emanated from ignorance, or if the boulder—it was like him, by Heaven! He met her eyes, and saw it was from positive knowledge that she spoke. He saw she had long since done with illusion and accepted Will Conolly for the thing he was; but even that did not tell why she remained with him, and had come to Arue.

And then there rose a jolly shout, and two little girls with bobbed hair, white dresses, socks, and low tan shoes ran out of the sorry house to where they stood. They raced straight to their mother's arms with glowing faces lifted to the one that glowed above them. And Jim Winton thought of his own two splendid little boys and their mother's fretful cry:

"Go away, go away! I don't want you pulling at me all the time!"

"Betsy, old thing," said Barbara Conolly, "this is Captain Winton. He's going to be a friend of ours."

The taller of the two, serious and brown-eyed, advanced with pretty dignity, took the captain's hand, and dropped a quaint little curtsy.

"How do you do, Captain Winton?" she said.

"Lorrilou!"

Barbara put her hand on the yellow head that was plunged into her skirt. The youngster came out of her hiding-place, charged at Winton with the slightest inclination of her head, and ran behind her mother again.

"Here!" cried Conolly. "Come here, Lorrilou, and—hup—love me."

"No!" cried Lorrilou. She came around in front of her mother and held up her arms. "I love you, Bob," she said; and Bob laughed and lifted her in her arms.

Winton's eyes grew misty, and he raged at fate; but why she had come to Arue was a mystery to him no more.

"Well, there are plenty girls will love me," said Conolly jauntily. "I should—hup—worry!"

"Tea is waiting." Bob looked away from the children, still smiling. "Come on in."

Carrying the child on her hip, she turned in the direction of the house.

"Oh, let me take her!" Winton cried.

At first Lorrilou refused coyly. The next instant she was on his shoulder, and Betsy had him by the hand.

"Call me Jim, old dears," he implored.

Very flatteringly they assured him that they would; and so they went to tea under the groggy awning.

"I am not expert at these things," Bob said in her slow way; "but you are a sailor. On your next trip you must come out and show me how to fix it better."

"Yes!" cried Conolly jovially. "Do that, Winton. And you'll be able to see how we progress. We'll have some tins of the Special Cure by that time."

Winton looked at Bob.

"I'd love to," he said; "but you've done a good job on this awning. You are strong," he added admiringly. "I'll snug it down a bit for you—that's all it needs. Come here, young uns, and pull!"

And pull they did, laughing and chattering like the mina-birds in the trees, while Bob stood by smiling, and Conolly went to sleep in the only comfortable chair.

"Never mind, we'll have another when you get back," Bob said. "The youngsters and I have a regular system, you know. Whenever we find a friend we want to keep, we get him a comfortable chair. We don't have them just for strangers. They might stop too long."

Winton laughed.

"Then you weren't sure about me?"

"Not before you came," she answered, looking at him in her slow, sweet way; "but we're going to get you a chair now. So don't forget that, as we say in the States, you're elected."

"Thank you," Jim Winton said.

He was confused and absurdly happy. He displaced an untidy pile of paper-covered books on a rickety old chair, and sent them sprawling and fluttering to the ground.

"Don't do that!" cried Lorrilou. "You make more work for Bob."

"I'm a clumsy brute, Lorrilou," he said penitently. "I'll pick 'em all up right away." Stooping down, he saw they were books upon the culture and cure of vanilla. "You are studying these?" he exclaimed, and glanced involuntarily at Conolly.

"Oh, yes," she replied, "and I am learning!"

Conolly woke up with a snort.

"Yes," he repeated nastily, "and I can't sleep a minute without being disturbed. Bob, dammit, take those brats away; they make too much noise. No—I'll go myself."

"Good-by, Captain Winton," smiled Bob. "Come and see us some time again."

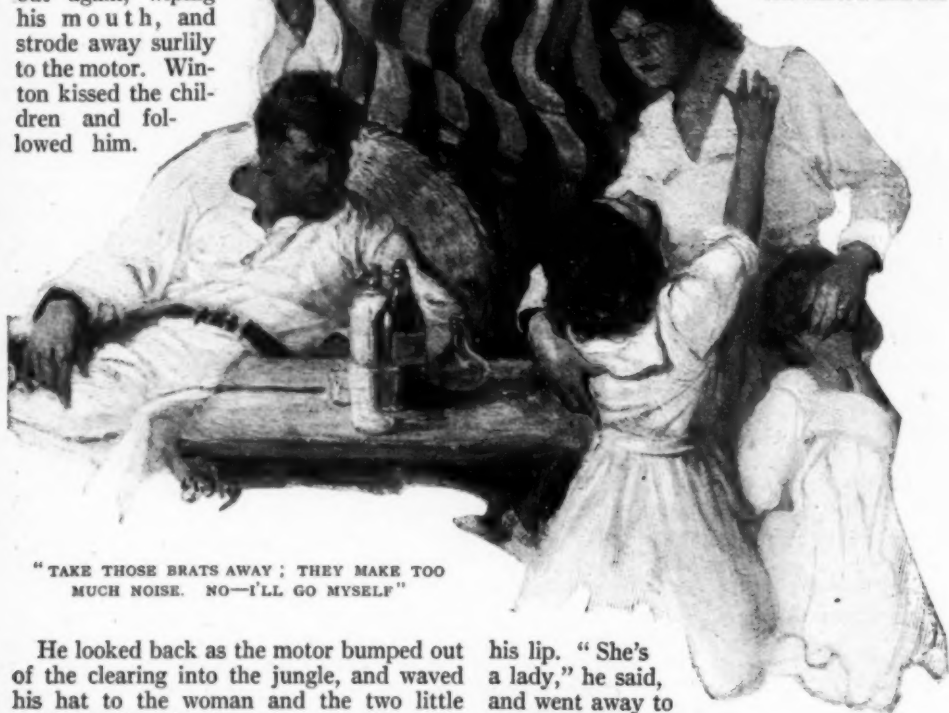
Conolly entered the house, came out again, wiping his mouth, and strode away surlily to the motor. Winton kissed the children and followed him.

"She's here to save what she can for the youngsters," said Winton. "It's my belief she knows nothing whatever of his dirty scheme. She hopes he's turned over a new leaf, and in that hope she's prepared to make any sacrifice."

And events proved that Winton had read the situation very clearly.

"But what's she like?" persisted Hudson.

"She's a—" Winton halted and bit



"TAKE THOSE BRATS AWAY; THEY MAKE TOO MUCH NOISE. NO—I'LL GO MYSELF"

He looked back as the motor bumped out of the clearing into the jungle, and waved his hat to the woman and the two little girls standing in the midst of that raw, green desolation with their arms entwined.

"It's what we thought," he said to the men waiting in Papeiti. "He's formed a stock company. He's actually bought the land, so it'll appear solid if any one thinks to look it up. He'll be going back with me next trip to San Francisco to sell the stock, and so a few more stenographers will be added to the merry crowd of street-walkers and a new lot of charwomen will jump into the bay. I might have known, when I first saw Norris, that pal of his, what the precious pair were about!"

"Yes, but the woman?" broke in Hudson. "What's she here for, and what's she like?"

his lip. "She's a lady," he said, and went away to the English consul's, and from there to his ship.

In an hour the Vahine left the government wharf and headed out through the reef. Late that night the second mate, at his post on the bridge, and very sick from the rum he had consumed in Papeiti, was surprised by a touch on his arm.

"You may take an hour below, Mr. Reed," the captain said. "I'll stand a watch myself."

Left alone by the astonished Mr. Reed, who stood not at all upon the order of his going, Winton lifted his face to the rocking stars.

"Bob, I love you!" he whispered tenderly, and stood a moment in rapt silence.

And then he started and drew his hand before his eyes, as if to restore to his vision the every-day business of life.

"James Winton, you confounded ass!" he muttered. "Stick to what you have. Trouble is real. Most other things are balloons that are dreams and burst. But there should be some one to take care of them," he thought, marching tirelessly to and fro. "What will she do when she knows? Will he bring his partner back with him? I don't like the idea of that beast Norris at Arue!"

II

NEITHER did Bob Conolly. The thing happened as Winton had feared and hoped it would not. Conolly went to San Francisco in the Ourangi, and returned in high spirits with his friend Mr. Norris. He remained three weeks on the island, until the Ourangi's return from Wellington; and in that time the two men were only one full day at Arue. Mrs. Conolly was not sorry for that.

All that Winton had guessed in his one visit was true. The only solid ground this last mad adventure offered for her courageous feet was the fact that the land had been bought and paid for. It was this knowledge that sustained her in the darkest moments, that kept her until dawn studying books upon growing and curing vanilla, and finally set her experimenting for the Special Cure about which Conolly talked so loudly.

She did not ask him to help her, nor did she even remotely expect that he would. The love and faith that at glowing sixteen had led her to accept as solemn truth his impassioned statement that only she could save him had settled to an enduring, humorous patience. What she asked now was not that he would reform, but that he would refrain from anything but his own rather dubious amusements.

There is no doubt at all that Conolly hated his wife. He hated her because of the promises he had made and broken, thereby finally killing her love. He hated her for that humorous patience that was neither hard nor yielding, that removed her from all the pain he was capable of inflicting and enabled her to walk serene and steadfast through the ordeal of her daily life. He hated the children because they gave her a happiness he was unable to mar.

Will Conolly was capable of very ugly

villainy, but laziness and self-indulgence limited his energies in that direction. A noble hatred requires effort. The sort of hatred he felt for his wife did not in the least lower his vitality; so the children were safe, and while he wished their mother a great harm, he could inflict upon her only the meanest of little ones.

He came back to Arue drunk, bringing his congenial friend Norris. In his absence Bob had managed one poor little drying-shed built of rough lumber that she had bought on her own credit at Maxwell's. Crowder, the manager there, had been quite frank in his statement that he was selling it to her. He let her have six cotton blankets, too, to cover the beans and keep them sweating.

"Why do you take so much trouble, Mrs. Conolly?" he said. "I'll pay you well for your green beans."

Bob flushed and laughed.

"You are going to get some of them in trade," she assured him; "but by and by you shall have all you will buy. I'm clearing land fast and planting vanilla."

Ten days or so after that the Ourangi got in. Will Conolly, drunk, and his friend Norris, only indifferent sober, spent the day at Arue.

The amount of money Conolly displayed would have roused Bob's suspicions if nothing had been said; but the men were hilarious, full of profane witticisms about the thirty-acre diamond-mine at Arue, and quoting at length from what Bob could not fail to recognize as a prospectus. By the way Conolly kept looking at her and laughing, she knew he thought he had discovered the bludgeon with which he could stun her at last; but even then she could not guess what it was. She thought it might be that he had brought her there to a tropical climate, where only a cruel amount of work on her part could save herself and the two little girls. She went out to the drying-shed, taking the children with her, and changed the blankets on the beans quickly, in the approved fashion.

"But the place is paid for," she said over and over again to herself. "It's paid for, and I'm willing to do the work."

She took comfort from the statement. Of course that was it—Will thought it a rich joke to see her working so hard. He and that—that man—were simply guying her. Immensely relieved, she returned to the house.



HIS WIFE REFUSED
REFRESHMENT, AND
DIRECTED ALL HER
CONVERSATION AT—

Bob did not notice the gift as he had hoped. It had taken her years to understand that a gift for her meant that the name and person of Will Conolly had been dragged through the lowest slums immediately available; and in Papeiti the slums are very low indeed. She put aside her sewing, swept the pearls into a dust-pan, and took them out to the river that flowed with sleepy murmuring, placidly reflecting the stars.

"I love my girls," she said aloud as she emptied the dust-pan, "and I have a friend!"

It was the first time she had thought of Winton as an individual. Up until then he had rested in her thoughts as a pleasant perfume, a lovely view, or as an unexpected act of kindness lingers fragrantly in the memory. She said it again as she retraced her steps through the moon-drenched clearing to the sorry shelter she called her home.

"I have a friend!"

Perhaps the pain caused by Conolly's latest act of brutality crystallized her feeling for the Englishman, which might, under happier circumstances, have remained dormant forever.

For two weeks Conolly remained at Arue. Not because he was out of money. He had plenty of that, and spent it lavishly on food

Will and his guest were gone, and a fat roll of twenty-dollar bills

lay on the floor by the sofa. Bob put the money away and returned gratefully to her work. She gave no further thought to what they had said, she was so glad that they were gone.

Some time after the Ourangi had sailed for San Francisco on her way back from Wellington, Will Conolly came home. He was weak, burned out with dissipation, shaking with chills. He came in late, after the children were asleep, and Bob could only think that he had walked from Papeiti. She looked up from the little dress she was mending as he staggered into the room and poured out a handful of seed pearls upon the table at her elbow.

"Well, Will," she said tranquilly, "do you want some tea before you turn in?"

Conolly turned away with an oath to the room that was set aside for him.



—CONOLLY, WHO, HAVING
FAILED TO HUMILIATE BOB,
WAS SURLY AND SARCASTIC
BY TURNS

and his own comfort. It almost seemed that he hung around waiting for Bob to ask him for some of the wealth he openly displayed to make the place the show plantation he was so fond of talking about.

But she did not. With serene, sweet temper she cooked, washed, and ironed; loved and companioned the two little girls, and taught them out of books. Once a week they made a hilarious excursion to Mataiaa for lessons from the French priest there. She cleared land, literally inch by inch, and set it out in vanilla. And she acquired a vast store of knowledge about the bean. The fact that it was an orchid took it out of the stupid commercial class, and in the marriage of the flowers she felt she probed deep into one of old nature's greatest secrets. She was not introspective, and even when the stifling heat of the jungle caused the machete to fall from her hand, and she sank down limp, with sweat streaming from every pore of her exhausted body, I do not think she wept.

At two o'clock in the morning, when old Oh Ha drew the good, tough French bread hot from his oven and blew a horn to announce that fresh bread was there for three pennies, Bob rose and walked through the jungle with the rest; but only she had refreshment in a bowl of hot coffee which Oh Ha had waiting for "my flien'."

It was on these early walks that she adorned the future for Betsy and Lorrilou. The plantation, she had long ago determined, was bound to succeed. Hurrying in the darkness through the wet jungle, she saw her girls pass from a splendid preparatory school to a university of equal excellence. She saw the plantation established, herself at the head of two hundred biddable Chinamen, and truck-load after truck-load of vanilla tins marked "Barbara Conolly, Arue," passed by the customs without examination. No wonder when she reached Oh Ha's the smile with which she greeted the shrewd old Chinaman warmed and won his heart.

Bob grew to love that morning walk. Cut off by hours from the weary round of the day that was past and the one yet to come, she felt secure, exalted by a strange happiness, and as if misfortune could never reach her again.

"I have my girls," she would say aloud, smiling in the heavy-scented dark. "I have a friend. This place is paid for, and I can work!"

Will Conolly had no place in her life, and all that had come and gone before they traveled to Arue was wiped away. And she bloomed. Hard work and love and dreams are sometimes great beautifiers.

One night she sat with a pile of mending. The children had been asleep for hours. Conolly was nodding in his comfortable chair, and the little lizards were dodging for moths about the lamp on the rickety table. Bob plied her needle on a rent in Lorrlou's frock, and the warmth and beauty of her dreams made a bright halo, out of which she looked with soft, shining eyes and smiling lips.

"This climate seems to agree with you."

She looked up from her work into her husband's surly face.

"I was thinking," she said. "Father Francis said this afternoon that the Vahine was due to-morrow. I've planned some perfectly dear dresses for the youngsters. I think I'll send up by the steamer for the material. The price of green vanilla stays up, thanks be!"

She supplied the children and herself by the sale of the beans from that one acre of vines.

Conolly, though he had plenty of money, never contributed a cent to the family support. He did this with intention. He liked to think of her pinched and anxious. Only he could not make this a reality. He had stripped her bare and brought her to the outposts of civilization, and yet, care-free and lovely, she thought of nothing more serious than new clothes for the infernal children!

The Vahine was due the next day. Very slowly his glance traveled about the room, out through the wide-opened doorway, and back to her absorbed, unconscious face; and something was born in his mean little soul that looked at her maliciously out of his half-closed eyes. Cursing the lizards, he rose and went away to his room.

Next morning he did not come out for coffee. Bob thought nothing of his absence. She had given her letter to old Oh Ha, who took it with the promise that it should reach Papeiti in ample time for the mail.

In the afternoon a motor jolted into the clearing. Captain Winton sat with the chauffeur, and in the tonneau was his wife, with Conolly lounging by her side.

Mrs. Winton descended from the motor with great evident enjoyment of Will Conolly's ceremonious assistance. She was small, fair, and very thin, with a fretful, infantile face and large, shallow, light-blue eyes. Her dress was beautiful and expensive; her light hair elaborately curled and

arranged under a wide, white lace hat. She looked at Bob, she looked at the children, she stared all around with hardly a bend of her thin neck to acknowledge Conolly's bland introduction.

"I cannot spend the night *here!*" was what she said.

So Bob saw the place upon which she had built such golden dreams of her children's future through another woman's eyes—a malicious woman's eyes. She laughed a laugh of whole-hearted amusement that made Conolly scowl and Mrs. Winton stare offensively. She did not look at Jim Winton at all. Actually the place was not nearly so wild and desolate as on his first visit, and she knew, though she could not have said how, that he had the kindest heart in the world. The strange lady overlooked Betsy and Lorrlou, and they shrank back against their mother and stared.

"It is very different from the ship," Bob said. "And you've been in her for so long—all the way up from Wellington." She looked down at the clinging children. "Aren't you fellows and Captain Winton going swimming? There's plenty of time before tea."

The little girls darted forward and seized his hands, and away all three went, laughing and chattering, as if suddenly released from an evil spell.

"Will you go, too, Mrs. Winton?" Bob went on winningly. "My bathing-suit would be miles too big for you, but I have a *parcu*."

The answer was a frigid stare. Edith Winton turned to Conolly.

"Will you take me somewhere out of the sun?" she said.

Conolly bowed, and she took his arm, but he kept his triumphant eyes on his wife.

"Please do look after Mrs. Winton," she said. "I have to change the blankets on the vanilla before I get tea."

She went away to the rickety drying-shed, and from there to the kitchen, where she made a great many scones, because she knew Jim Winton liked them.

"And he's our company," she said aloud.

Tea was rather a terrible affair. Winton sat with Betsy and Lorrlou, helped them to consume three plates of scones, and suffered abominably. Edith, his wife, refused refreshment, and directed all her conversation at Conolly, who, having failed to

humiliate Bob, had salved his disappointment with several drinks, and was surly and sarcastic by turns. Bob felt amused at what she termed Mrs. Winton's lack of adaptability, and desperately sorry for her friend.

"Why can't she be decent and polite?" she thought. "It only costs a little effort. Oh, how can she wound him so?"

She saw how he held on to the children, as if the touch of their soft little bodies assuaged his pain. She understood that.

"Why, it was the young uns fixed it so Will couldn't hurt me any more!"

The opportunity presenting itself, she spoke to him, anxious to make him feel that it was only the greatest folly, and that it mattered to Betsy and Lorrilou and herself not at all.

Edith, announcing they had stayed much too long, walked to the motor on Conolly's unsteady arm.

"Don't mind, Captain Winton," said Bob gently. "It was really awfully sweet in your wife to come to this wild, barbaric spot, and—you know—women like civilized things—"

Winton looked at her, and all he felt was in his eyes. Slowly, very slowly, the color drained away from her face and returned in a lovely, wild-rose flush. She read the words he could not say, and understood and answered.

"It's—it's awfully sweet of you—" he began huskily; but Bob turned away to greet the children.

Up they rushed with a string of fish they had speared, and begged Winton to accept it as a token of their undying love. Edith Winton was furious. She tried to give Conolly her opinion of the whole performance, but he had gone to sleep on the seat at her side, and only snored. The youngsters ran into Winton's arms, fish and all, and kissed him good-by; while he, for the life of him, could not but look at Bob over their heads.

"I'll bring you each something from San Francisco for these bully fish," he said. "Good-by until then, old dears!"

Edith said nothing, and Conolly snored. So the motor bumped across the clearing and vanished from sight among the trees. Then Bob threw back her head and clapped her hand with a look of very real pain upon her heart.

"Nothing like that is going to happen to us *ever* again," she said, tight-lipped.

"Who is that woman, to put the only friend I have and my children to shame? I have the blue-prints of the plans—I must get to work!"

She looked at the desolate clearing, the shaky old drying-shed she had put up herself, the tumble-down, hybrid house, the faint, rough track through the jungle which they dignified by the name of road.

"I need heaps of money and droves of men," she said aloud, and her eyes filled up with tears.

What were all the things she felt so strong and sure to do? Dreams, dreams! They were made up of the moist, perfumed air that lay along the path to Oh Ha's bakery at two o'clock in the morning, and there was nothing real or tangible about them. The hour before the dawn gave them to her; the hour of the dawn took them away. In the broad, revealing light of day she was a helpless fool. In her effort to save the past whole for her children's future she had brought them to this—this!

And she had lived on with her eyes shut, doping herself with dreams. It had taken the razor-keen edge of another woman's spite to show her how she really lived at Arue—to show her how desolate she was, how truly forlorn—to show that what she thought was love for her children was only neglect, while she kept herself drowsy with dreams—to show her a man whose love answered hers, and who, whether he would or no, beckoned her to a land she could never, never reach. This, this was the reality of the glorious present that she claimed had made her forget so much!

The wolves of the past leaped upon her. She clapped her hands to her ears, and turned to left and right, distracted which way to flee. And then she heard a pleading, frightened cry:

"Cono, Cono!"

It was Oh Ha speeding through the jungle and crying as he ran. He stopped at the edge of the clearing and stared about wildly.

"Cono, Cono!" he cried.

Betsy and Lorrilou ran out of the house, where they were finishing the last of the scones. Betsy reached Oh Ha first, and with the uncanny intuition of childhood instantly comprehended his outpouring of execrable French.

"Bob, Bob, Chen is oh, awful sick!" she cried.

Chen was Oh Ha's son, a veritable butter-ball, pale yellow and rolling in fat.

"Cono, Cono!" wailed Oh Ha. "*Venez, venez avec moi!*"

And she hurried away with him, the children running in front, their heads checkered with the soft light of the afterglow that pierced through the thick covering of the trees.

It was broad, shining day when they returned. The little girls had slept snug in the bakery while Bob and Oh Ha fought through the night, disputing inch by inch the claim that death had laid to Chen. The sun had been shining two long hours when Bob at last placed the softly sleeping baby in its clean bed and stood upright, her face radiant with gratitude. And Oh Ha fell down and grasped her ankles with his gnarled old yellow hands, and kissed the laces that tied her little white shoes.

She raised him up, laughing.

"Give me some bread, Oh Ha, and let me take my children home."

The little girls ran ahead of her down the pathway; but she walked slowly, for somehow she was suddenly afraid to get there. The trade-wind, splashing and roaring in the jungle growth, made her nervous, and she was tired, sick at heart, and very lonely.

As she entered the clearing, the green peak that thrust up through the center of the island, with its hovering wreath of mist, towered high above her, and across the placid green waters of the lagoon the breakers were thundering and creaming on the reef. The jungle, with its grilling heat, its silent antagonism, and its green desolation; Jim Winton, with his calm strength, and with love in his cobalt eyes; Edith, with her ability to torture; Will, whose power in that direction had returned with her discovery of her love for Winton—all these seemed to blend in with the green peak and its motionless fog-ring, with the reef and its restless water. All, all had been there as long as she had lived and toiled at Arue, thousands and thousands of years.

Slowly she crossed the clearing. The slavery into which she had so blithely entered at ignorant sixteen had never before brought her so near to despair. She glanced at the watch on her sunburnt wrist. Past ten o'clock! The Vahine had steamed out through the passage and was gone. The gaudy *pareu* curtain that took the place of a front door under the sorry awning blew

inward from the trades. The cat had killed nine huge rats, and had placed them in a row before the doorway. The little girls counted them again and again with shrieks of delighted laughter, and ran off, calling Madame to praise her for such prowess. Bob stepped wearily over the grisly row to enter. She knew Madame would remove the bag once it had been inspected. She saw a paper pinned to the blowing curtain with a flawed, black-pearl pin. The pin made her smile even then. It was surely the sorriest sop that ever came a woman's way. The paper was covered in Will's straight-up-and-down, rather sprawling hand:

I'm sick of you and the darned kids. Since you are so well able to take care of yourself, I have gone home on the Vahine. WILL.

Bob looked from the note to the flawed pin.

"I wonder if this means he's making love to Mrs. Winton," she said aloud.

She laughed in spite of her dejection, and brushed past the curtain into the room. The lock-box, containing the roll of bills that Will had dropped that day under the awning, and all of her little capital, lay with the top wrenched off, gaping at her from the floor. When Conolly returned, while she was at Oh Ha's, he had made a clean sweep of all available funds, leaving her only the flawed black-pearl pin and the blue-print of the model plantation. The deeds to the place, which she also had signed, were in Papeiti at the Banque de L'Indo-Chine.

Wrapped in her dream, she had never paused to speculate why he had bought the place at all. Why, when money meant wine to him, elegant clothes, rich food, expensive cigars, and beautiful, easy-virtued women, had he sunk such a comparatively large sum in this tropical wilderness twenty-five good French miles from a saloon and twelve tedious days' steam from a great city? She did not stop to wonder now. The world went black about her. She sank upon her knees, her bosom heaving with deep, distressful sobs.

"Oh, young uns, my young uns!"

Then she heard them laughing and shouting outside.

"Bob, dear Bob, come on out!"


The clock on the table struck slowly, and, faint and far away, clear and sweet above the roar of the surf on the reef and the

trades in the trees, she heard the bell in the little Roman Catholic chapel at Mataiaa. She knew it was time to change the blankets on the beans. Obedient to the summons, she went out and crossed to the tumble-down shed. The little girls pulled the fresh blan-

like the shadows in the clearing. Bob won back to her old serenity and smiled as always, but with an added gravity which somehow increased her beauty. Only when she went to Oh Ha's she hurried with her eyes searching the ground for possible obstacles.

And she studied the blue-prints. They held and fascinated her just as a guaranteed-never-to-fail system holds and fascinates a gambler at Monte Carlo. She pinned them to a rough board, which would have served better to boost up the sorry drying-shed, and sat and brooded over them, with the little old coal-oil lamp smoking beside her, when she should have been asleep and storing up strength for the next exhausting, monotonous day.

And as she brooded, her determination grew and hardened to transfer those plans from paper to the plantation, to make them real, for the sake of the young uns. For, no matter what induced Will to buy



BOB AND OH HA FOUGHT
THROUGH THE NIGHT, DISPUT-
ING INCH BY INCH THE CLAIM
THAT DEATH HAD LAID TO CHEN

kets, all warm, from the line, and ran in ahead of her, laughing gleefully.

Bob lifted her head, her old smile tightened her drooping lips, and, almost involuntarily, her heavy step quickened. For she knew, with a queer pang of sadness, that the moment for despair was past, and that she must continue forward with double courage. The children had only herself. The coming of Edith Winton and Will's desertion had torn up forever the pathway to her beautiful land of dreams.

III

So the days passed at Arue, coming up out of the east and vanishing into the west

the land in the first place, the fact remained that he could not sell it without her knowledge and consent. The place was ideal for vanilla, the plans were ideal for the place, and when she had come to this conclusion she rose and walked to the edge of the awning.

It was after midnight, and the moon was moving down into the west. In the soft brilliance of its waning light Bob saw the land cleared and set out in vanilla, the long line of drying-sheds, the model quarters for the Chinamen, the wide, white road curving out through the trees.

"I need men here," she said aloud. "Men and money!"

And with the spoken words her rainbow bubble burst and vanished. There lay the pitiful clearing in its green, jungly desolation, and there stood the sorrowful old drying-shed leaning in upon itself, the very quintessence of helplessness and despair. The river, bearing gold-and-red hibiscus blossoms upon its placid bosom, glittered in the moonlight or made deep, mysterious pools of blackness beneath the trees. Madame had laid out three more dead rats and was dragging up another, purring loud in triumph.

Bob stood with her head up and smiled whimsically, without bitterness. She was strong enough to face the reality at Arue. Her dream was only a blue-print tacked to a rough board.

And then she saw Oh Ha emerge from among the black shadows cast by the trees. He dangled a pullet carelessly by a pandanus thong, and carried eggs in a little basket woven of pieces of leaf from the coconut-palm.

Bob laughed outright when she saw him. She knew he had not expected to find her there, but had planned to place his offerings beside Madame's, to be discovered by her in the morning. He drew near and laid down his burdens.

"Chen is a fine boy," he said in the funniest French. "My friend saved his life. All that I have belongs to my friend."

Bob stooped and lifted the basket of eggs to smother a sigh. She could save the life of Oh Ha's little motherless yellow boy, but to save the future of her own two children she was powerless.

"What have you here?"

Oh Ha crossed over and placed a gnarled, earth-brown forefinger upon the board above the blue-prints.

And all in a rush Bob told him. Very eloquently she transferred the plans from paper to the plantation, painted the prosperity of Arue in glowing colors, and backed her energetic statements with a neat bundle of her Special Cure.

"Only two things are necessary," she

concluded; "plenty of men, and plenty of money to get a start. After that—well, twenty per cent is the least it will pay."

She stammered and suddenly stopped. Self-consciousness returned upon her, enthusiasm fell away like a shed garment, and her cheeks flushed hot with shame. She looked at Oh Ha, bow-legged and squat in blue overalls and a flimsy blue blouse, his wrinkled yellow face bent above the bundle of Special Cure as he fingered it professionally.

"How far I have fallen!" she thought. "I am deserted by my husband, I love another woman's, and I pour out my heart to a miserable old Chinaman in the dead watches of the night."

The picture she made appealed to her humorously, and she repressed a strong desire to laugh.

Oh Ha raised his almond-shaped eyes and regarded her shrewdly by the yellow light of the smoky lamp.

"I will get these two things that are necessary," he said in his funny French.

Thoughtfully he bent to the board and followed with his horny thumb the white road winding through the trees.

"But first to clear the land," he muttered.

He stepped over his offerings beside the dead rats and shuffled across the clearing along the way he had come. As his bent back disappeared in the shadows that fringed the jungle, Bob shut her eyes and sighed deeply. This was what came of sitting up late and hoping impossible things. What in the world had got into Oh Ha? Those blue-prints? Good Lord, they set everybody crazy!

Madame added another rat to her bag, and then inspected the pullet, which cackled loudly. Bob opened her eyes. Oh Ha was coming back again. The shadows were still impenetrable, but she could hear the sharp-edged grass rustling harshly about his bare feet.

"Only to think," she murmured involuntarily, "of not having to buy shoes!"

Oh Ha came under the awning, a huge bundle of whitey-brown French notes extended in his hand.

"You buy green vanilla for Special Cure," he said. "Offer two centimes more than the going price."

Bob stared at the money and then back into his inscrutable yellow face.

"Oh Ha," she said slowly, "just what do you mean? I'm perfectly willing to buy

green vanilla for you, but I don't know how to—to dicker with the natives."

"My flien' dicker one piecee black man!" cried Oh Ha loudly, shocked into pidgin-English. It was the first emotion he had displayed, and Bob blushed. "It will become known that you offer two centimes more," he added, once more in French, "and you will buy green beans here at your home in Arue."

"You mean—you mean we'll go into partnership, Oh Ha?" Bob faltered.

Oh Ha regarded her meditatively. It was plain he had gone far beyond that in his thoughts.

"The biggest thing was accomplished," he said, "when you perfected your cure. For the rest—yes, I will help you work it, and it will be a good thing for us all. But remember, keep the secret you have discovered to yourself, and cure and cure and cure. Once a month we will audit the bills. It is nearly time to draw the oven. Be sure to come while the bread is hot."

He shuffled away across the clearing.

Bob Conolly sank upon her knees before the row of dead rats, the squawking pullet, and the little green basket of eggs. She lifted her face to the moon-bright sky, and it was pale and washed with tears.

"Almighty God," she whispered, "make it true! For the sake of the young uns, make it true!"

Oh Ha's power to disseminate information was uncanny. All the next day Bob weighed and bought green vanilla-beans at two centimes above the going price. Still they poured in upon her. The fat roll of bills grew steadily thinner as the days rolled away, and all the time a gang of chattering Chinamen cleared land.

Once she needed some more blankets, and Oh Ha supplied them promptly. Then the drying-shed became entirely too small. Bob told this to Oh Ha one evening when he shuffled under the awning and into the yellow circle of lamplight. He did not answer, but went up to the board of blueprints and began studying them, following black and white lines laboriously with his gnarled old finger. He stared at them long and thoughtfully. Then he turned to Bob.

"Come, my friend," he said, "and hold the lamp while I drive stakes where the drying-sheds must be."

And Bob obeyed, standing over him with the lamp in her hand like a beautiful, smiling goddess lighting a stooping gnome.

Followed days in which loads of lumber lurched over the rough track through the jungle. The sound of saw and hammer drowned out the chatter of the men clearing land; and the long line of drying-sheds that Will Conolly was so fond of describing began to rise, new and dazzling in the glaring sun. There was much work and there were happy hearts at Arue, and the mistress of the plantation was the happiest of all.

One morning Oh Ha drew his oven and blew the horn, and Bob obeyed the mellow summons with winged feet.

"Oh Ha," she cried, "I have six tins, Oh Ha—six tins of Special Cure!"

Oh Ha put down on the table the bowl of steaming coffee, two loaves of hot bread, and the broad green leaf in which they were to be carried.

"It is good," said he. "And the Vahine gets in to-day. I will send a letter to my friend in Sydney."

Bob drank her coffee in silence. Oh Ha's news sobered her, and her joy over what she had accomplished somehow oozed away. She rolled the loaves in the green leaf and went slowly back through the dew-drenched jungle.

It was a month since Will had deserted her. In a few hours Jim Winton would bring the Vahine through the passage in the reef to the government wharf at Papeiti. She wanted to see him. An odd, fierce hunger wrung her heart like sharp pain. She stopped short in the narrow pathway, her head thrown back, the bread in the green leaf clasped tight against her bosom. She wanted to see him, and she would. She would! Then her body relaxed and her arms fell to her sides.

"Bob Conolly, what a fool—what an awful fool you are!" she said aloud.

Laughing with rueful sweetness, she hurried on. At sunrise she was up again with Betsy and Lorrilou. After a jolly swim and breakfast, finding that she could not turn her back upon her trouble, she faced it resolutely, as was her way. She realized that she was in for a very bad day.

"But I'm not going to loaf around and be miserable," she said. "The Vahine is in. All right! I cannot go to Papeiti, and if I could it would not be right."

So with Betsy and Lorrilou she went up into the acre of bearing vanilla and worked until the heavy heat of noon drove them back to the beach. Then, while the children slept, she sat under the stained, sag-

ging awning and sewed, and thought gratefully of Oh Ha, and longed inexpressibly to send a letter to Papeiti, to hear Jim Winton's voice, only to meet his eyes.

The trades hallooed and roared themselves away, the sun rolled around into the west, the coconut-palms and breadfruit-trees drew long, black shadows straight to the white sand of the beach. A Chinaman, under the personal supervision of Oh Ha, was beginning to whitewash the almost completed drying-sheds a soft, rosy pink. Bob took up her sewing again. Oh Ha, the miracle-maker! She thought he came across

to the awning, and looked up; but it was Jim Winton, brown and handsome in his starched white suit. The first white face, but for the children and the French priest at Mataiaa, that she had seen in a month—the face of the man she loved.

Up she sprang, and the thimble flew from her finger and lay in the grass at his feet, where it glowed like a tiny golden coal.

"Oh!" she cried breathlessly. "You've come, you've come!" And then: "What has happened, Captain Winton?"

"You don't know?" he queried in a queer, hard tone of surprise.

(To be concluded in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

The Ferryman

A FOOT-NOTE TO THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT WAR—HOW A FLYING MAN
LEARNED THAT "THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT"

By Frank Julian Price

THE ship was bowling westward merrily at its antebellum gait of twenty knots an hour, and no longer wearing its camouflage of strange colors and patterns. A party of passengers had gathered in the smoking-room. Most of the men were bronzed and weather-worn, the result of service in the Canadian or English air forces, and entitled to wear medals and service stripes galore, though these were not much in evidence.

To me, an old fellow, who was not of the service—though with all my heart and soul I envied those boys their experiences more than their decorations—they talked freely. My many ocean trips, dating from the very beginning of the war, had given me some interesting stories to tell, and we ex-

changed our wares like Indians at barter. We became more and more like old chums. When one of them called me "daddy," they all adopted the name, and daddy it was to the end of the voyage.

My stories only served to start them, and then, in return, they carried me away in a breath, as it were, like the wizard and his magic carpet, telling of dizzy flights over the boche lines, photographing, bombing, dueling with the German airmen, or night raiding. They never would have told these yarns except as a natural exchange for mine, and I was getting more than value received.

A long-faced, solemn-looking fellow whom I had not hitherto observed, though we were three days out, entered the room

EDITORIAL NOTE—The writer of this article assures us that while the name of the "ferryman" has been disguised, the account of his war experience is in all essential details strictly true, and that the aviator himself is well known to many English and Canadian flying men. It can readily be understood that the services of such a man would be in demand for the important work assigned to him, when a well-authenticated incident of the war is recalled. When the first of the large British bombing-planes was sent to the front, the pilot to whom it was entrusted lost his way and alighted in a German flying-field, where, of course, he and his plane were promptly captured; and the mistake proved a serious one, for it is believed that the formidable Gothas, which the Germans used so effectively for a time, were largely based on the design of the British machine.

in a half-timid, half-awkward manner. He was in aviator's uniform, and alone. He looked prematurely old. Something about the man caught my eye instantly, and I asked, as he tiptoed his way shyly through the room, without speaking to any one, and went out at the other side:

"Who is that fellow?"

The flier to whom I spoke, and who had just been regaling me with a story of a thrilling flight, glanced quickly in the direction of the other man and said:

"Why, daddy, haven't you met him? That's Hard-Luck Rodgers."

"Hard-Luck Rodgers!" I replied. "Why, that sounds like a character in a novel or a melodrama."

"Yes, Hard-Luck Rodgers," the other returned, "and no character for a play or a book, as I see it; but he has a story."

"Tell me," I said, and then changed my mind quickly. "No, I would rather meet him."

No sooner said than done. The accommodating young airman was out of the room like a shot, and in a few moments returned with Rodgers and introduced us.

My new acquaintance saluted me gravely and sat silent while the round of anecdotes and "that reminds me" went forward. I noticed that while the others laughed, he only smiled. There was a strange, far-away expression in his eyes, like that of a caged lion in the zoo; and yet he was acutely alive to all that was going on about him. With his appearance, I noticed, all reference to aviation exploits at the front had ceased. I think Rodgers must have noticed it, too; it would be difficult to account for his apparent embarrassment otherwise.

The little party broke up shortly, some for a constitutional on deck, others for shuffleboard, or ring-toss, or reading, and Rodgers and I were left alone.

"Rodgers," I began, "how long were you in the air service?"

"Since its beginning, sir," he replied.

"Have you flown observation planes, or scout planes, or what, mostly?"

He looked up with a faint smile, and answered with a wide sweep of his hand that seemed to take in the universe:

"Everything, sir."

I showed my astonishment.

"'Everything' is a pretty large contract," I said, "in a field that is so rigidly divided into specialties."

"It is true, sir," he said, in a tone the

melancholy of which could not be mistaken.

Plainly he was not eager to talk, and yet I felt that there was something about his record that he wanted me to understand.

"You must have had hundreds of thrilling experiences," I went on. "How many boche planes did you get?"

He bit his lip. There was a long silence before he spoke.

"None," he replied.

I felt how much the utterance of that word meant. We were sitting close, and I put my hand on his arm.

"Rodgers," I said gently, "I'm sorry. I don't know why, but I sort of feel you're all right. Tell me about it, will you?"

He thought for a full minute, and then swallowed hard a couple of times, straightened up, and said:

"It was this way, sir. In the beginning the Germans had the upper hand in the air. They outnumbered us two and sometimes three to one. There was an urgent call for planes at the front. There was only one way to get them there quickly—they had to be flown across the English Channel to the aerodromes nearest the lines. I had studied planes of all sorts before the war, also engines. I guess my knowledge of the improvements and changes came by intuition; for there was no time to study while the rush work of hurrying machines to the front was going on. Also I knew every trick of flying, and they tell me that I have a bird's sense of direction. My duty was prescribed by the higher officers, of course—at first by the captains, then by the colonel, and so on up to the brigadier-general who commanded our whole air outfit. I would report in the morning at a certain flying-field in England, find there a new machine, receive my orders to take it to a given point in France, look over it, give the propellers and the engine a quick whirl to see that things seemed all right—there was little time for real testing—and then soar away into the air and over the Channel and the bleak lowlands of France to my destination. Then, usually, I would take the slow, creeping train back to the nearest port, crawl across the ribbon of water to Dover in any old tub at any hour, then by train to my starting-point. Sometimes I would take a sick plane back for repairs and tuning. Rain or shine, winter or summer, sometimes in wild storms, sometimes in fogs and darkness, this cease-

less to-and-fro kept up. Always the wild, exhilarating flight in a brand-new "bird" of high power, and then the sluggish return by train and boat and train, as if a wounded snake were dragging its half-paralyzed length along the surface of the earth."

He paused, thinking.

"Your life showed great contrasts," I said; "the very zenith and nadir of a flying man's life, I imagine."

"Yes," he resumed, "I suppose that's what you would call it. And all the time I kept thinking and hoping that my turn would come. I saw friends of mine—dozens, yes, scores of good fellows—receive the machines I brought to them, step in, mount into the air, and fly away over the German lines. Sometimes they won their fights, and I was glad. Sometimes they did not return, and I hated the boche always more and more, and longed to square the account."

"Many times, as I reached my landing-place, I could see the gun-flashes along the firing-lines, and often and often the temptation was almost too great to withstand. To go on and on over the lines of the Hun, to challenge a German flier, or a whole circus of fliers! It would have made little difference to me whether they were one or many, if only I could either have my revenge or fall in a real fight. But orders were orders. I landed my weapons for the other fellows to fight with, dragged myself away, and went back for more weapons."

"And did you never get over the front?" I asked.

"I never did," he said. "I began by asking my captain for permission. His refusal was peremptory. After an interval I asked my colonel. I pleaded with him long and hard. Although he refused, he said he would not oppose me if I chose to lay my case before the chief of the air force. The chief came down for inspection. It happened to be a mighty critical time for us. The colonel had made it possible for me to speak to him in private."

"General," I said, "there is only one thing that I want."

"Rodgers," he replied, "your service has entitled you to ask for almost anything. I have recommendations about you which are under consideration. Your work has been more than satisfactory. Do you want leave of absence, a long furlough?"

"No, sir," I said. "I want to go over

the front for one fight—just one. I want to settle a score with these Huns, because they got some friends of mine, some of the best boys we sent over. I can get them just as well as any man in the service, I don't care who he is. I tell you this straight, even if I do say it myself."

"The general stepped over to me and put his hand on my shoulder."

"Rodgers," he said, "I don't know just how many machines you have piloted from England to the fighting-lines in France, but I know that they have run into the hundreds. I also know that you have never smashed a wing or a propeller-blade, or harmed a plane or engine in any way. They tell me that your machines are always ready for business as soon as you land. Rodgers, if I could consider what your reward ought to be, and nothing else, I should tell you to go and get a boche flier—twenty, fifty of them, if you could; but there are other considerations." He gripped my shoulder hard and looked me straight in the eye. "I am fighting for England, and you are fighting for England, although you may not know it—for England and for civilization. If anything happened to you, Rodgers, *what should I do for a jerryman?* No one in the service can do this work as you can; no one is quite so reliable, so faithful, so sure of himself. The boys must have planes, the air must have its fighters, and you must be, as you have been, *my—our—ferryman.*"

"His strong hand pinched my shoulder so hard that it hurt. He looked away for a moment and then said:

"Ask me any other favor, and you shall have it."

"General," I replied, "I do not want anything else. I'll stick on the job."

"And then the tears came. I could not help it. The general reached down and took my hand and gripped it."

"Good-by and good luck, Rodgers," he said, turned abruptly, and went away.

"That is my story, sir."

Rodgers relapsed into silence. For a long time neither of us spoke a word, then I looked up at him and started to quote that matchless line of Milton's.

"Rodgers," I said, "they also serve—"

I could get no further. Rodgers's solemn eyes looked up at me mournfully for a moment.

"That's just what my mother said," he exclaimed in surprise.

The Epic of the Mississippi

THE WONDERFUL RIVER WHOSE IMMENSE VALLEY IS THE HEART OF THE UNITED STATES—ITS PART IN AMERICAN HISTORY, ITS PRESENT IMPORTANCE, AND ITS FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

By Raymond S. Spears

MILLIONS of our people, men and women, regard the Mississippi River with affection for its romance as well as with appreciation of its geographical importance and vast commercial value. Its influence permeates the whole country, and there is no hamlet too humble, no metropolis too proud, to admit the strange wonder of the flood that drains more than a million square miles of our national territory. Time and time again it has been decisive in the affairs of the country and of individual citizens, enriching or ennobling some, destroying others.

When delegates from fifteen Western States approach the head of the Railroad Administration, and urge him to use the Mississippi more fully for freight transportation, they dwell significantly upon the commercial needs of the present moment. They point to the tons, the millions of tons, which could be set afloat at Pittsburgh, or Chicago, or Kansas City, and carried down to the deep-sea port of New Orleans. The service of the moment is performed when the practical demand of the hour is expressed, but the feeling of a great nation for a wonderful phenomenon, made up of ten thousand smaller phenomena, looks with fond memory and delight through the history of the mighty river, and picks its subjects for expression according to personal ideas.

THE MISSISSIPPI IN HISTORY

Justin Winsor could write his great studies of the Mississippi Basin, every sentence a monument, and Mark Twain could write book after book on the same topic, every sentence a smile, with the underlying pathos of undying humor. Parkman could fill volume after volume with the records of the white men who first explored the

great stream and its countless branches, and Emerson Hough could set forth in quick-moving pages the romance of a financial crisis that hinged on the exploitation of Mississippi bottom-lands. Davy Crockett could put into five words—"half horse and half alligator"—a remarkable type of the old-time river-man.

History is woven with science, romance with psychology, in the story of the huge flood made up of the beautiful green waters of the Tennessee and the Cumberland, of the muddy yellows of the Missouri, of the clay-stained tide of the Red River, of underground flows from arid lands tainted with alkali and oil, of the wash from iron and coal, of humic acid from vast forest wildernesses, of the icy meltings of snow-capped peaks, and of bubbling springs in the valley sands.

For more than thirty-five years the United States government has been issuing an unbroken succession of volumes that tell the facts about the Mississippi. The reports of the Mississippi River Commission are the most absorbing scientific documents imaginable. They record in feet, inches, and tenths of an inch the rise of floods and the fall of passing droughts. They discuss waves of running sand and gravel, and the precipitation of microscopic particles of mud into vast acreages of alluvial soil.

These last, under the Department of Agriculture, become subject to learned discussion of cotton-plantations and corn-lands and rice-fields. The Forest Service turns to the matter of cottonwoods, cypress, gums, and live-oaks. The Bureau of Commerce considers the production of pearls—the most beautiful pearls produced in the world—and the questions of coal-transportation, manufactures, and fishing.

The migration of ducks and geese, of fish and humans, and the output of steel-mills, coke-ovens, oil-wells, and coal-mines, mingle together so intricately as to dismay the mental habit that clings to but one tiny thread and seeks to follow one idea through diversities fit for a thousand histories.

The alert mind seizes ten thousand picturesque points in the long story of the Mississippi. One moment it may be pondering on Simon Girty, the predecessor of the old-fashioned Western "bad man," who would ride into a pioneer settlement and "shoot up" the place on horseback, as long ago as the last decade of the eighteenth century; or on Lewis Wetzel, one of the original Indian-slayers, and a great gallant of the frontier, till the women took to despising him for murdering an aboriginal chief who had saved him from torture and death. The next moment the same mind may be amazed by a log raft with two million feet of logs floating in majestic grandeur on a mile-wide river surface, steered by a three-hundred-horse-power steamboat rudder at the stern, and a sixty-horse-power "bug" steamboat at the bow.

THE GREAT RIVER AND ITS PROBLEMS

Or, again, one can imagine a government engineer turned loose upon the problem of the shifting quicksands of Plum Point or Lake Providence reaches. He has the fact that the Missouri annually pours about two hundred million cubic yards of sand and gravel into the river bottoms past the mouth of the Ohio at Cairo. He has the fact that the flow of the river ranges from seventy-five thousand cubic feet a second to more than two million cubic feet a second, between low water and the grand and impressive overflow.

He must take into account the different currents that prevail with each foot of rise from low-water mark to fifty or sixty feet higher at high tide. He must consider the effect of revetment work on some banks, of the caving of the bottoms into the river at other points, and the steady flow of wave after wave of sand, silt, gravel, and other debris.

He observes that a bare Mississippi River sand-bar under a strong wind blows and drifts like snow, or like the sand waves of the desert. He knows that a short, swift rise of the river means a rushing current of from seven to twelve or fifteen miles an hour, while the long, slow swelling of the

vast spring flood makes up by its volume what it lacks in speed. Moreover, in the majestic flood there are hurricane swirls of water that tear the substance of sand-bars and submerged banks. The drift of timber, the spoil of thousands of square miles of flooded lands, tears down the river, the long prongs of snags jabbing into the sides of steamboats. One rush of broken ice tore up two million dollars' worth of property by raiding down the Tennessee into the "safe" ice harbor just above Paducah, dislocating the summer traffic plans of nobody knows how many steamboat lines.

Here is the untamed power of billions of cubic feet of water falling from ten thousand feet of elevation in the Rockies, and from the long gorges of the Appalachians. Here are one hundred thousand miles of rivers, ten thousand miles of navigable streams, and horse-power rampant as all the flesh-and-blood horses of the plains never were. One hundred million people are annually regaled and exasperated by the irresistible powers that nature wields in this great central basin.

Men have dammed the little rivulets of a thousand gullies and valleys in the Appalachians to turn the wheels of grist-mills, so that corn can be ground for pone and sprouts ground for moonshine. They have stretched their masonry across the Great Falls of the Missouri to smelt copper and silver. Myriads of horse-power are beginning to serve the nation by hauling railroad-trains over the long divides. They have bridled the upper Mississippi at Keokuk.

In the rich region of the lower valley they have built more than two thousand miles of breastworks to hold back the spring-tide, to enable the planters of cotton and corn to continue their crop-making, though the surface of the Mississippi be on a level twenty-five feet above their soil, and nineteen feet higher than their heads. They have fronted the most savage and desperate attacks of swirling currents and flood depths. Mattresses of willow-trees, covered by the blasted riprap of Missouri and Arkansas stone, have held firm against the boiling onslaughts of swift waters and the insidious and eternal wear of unremitting pressure.

More to the purpose of the present moment, the government engineers have expelled the quicksands and confined the waters so that from the vagaries of running

waves of sand and shallow films of water, true channels have been forced through, and the old two or three feet of available low-water depth has been increased to eight or ten feet, practically guaranteed up a thousand miles of river. Forty years ago James B. Eads confounded the carping can't-do-its and opened the Passes to any steamer's depth of draft.

These engineers have made it possible to bring coal down the Ohio and Mississippi in five-million-bushel fleets, and to raft timber down the Mississippi in fifteen-thousand-ton lots.

A HIGHWAY OF CIVILIZATION

No more stirring record of American accomplishment is found than the statement made long ago by a mere note-maker at Wheeling, on the Ohio River, who wrote:

More than ten thousand flatboats, carrying settlers, have gone down the Ohio River this year.

They came on foot over the muddy, punched-up wilderness trails; they rived planks from green timber; they floated away down the Ohio and braved the falls at Louisville. A human flood, they overflowed the banks of the Mississippi, washed back the savage Indian tribes, and took possession irresistibly. When Napoleon investigated the region of the upper Mississippi, he learned that behind the demand for free trade at the mouth of the great river were thirty thousand prime riflemen of Kentucky. The mere fact of that army's existence carried the American flag to the Pacific Coast.

The wealth of the Middle West, of the fifteen Western States that are appealing to the government for the profitable service of the Mississippi, is based largely on the foundation laid when ten thousand steamers plied the great river, in high water and low, before a railroad had entered its basin. Those steamboats, carrying the people, carrying their products, importing their necessities, insured to the nation the States of Missouri, lower Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Iowa, Arkansas, and Louisiana. The river keel-boats that carried the Lewis and Clark Expedition insured the Pacific Coast to the possession of the United States.

The Mississippi River, reaching out into its million miles of territory, has been the vital factor of the country from the hour

when Daniel Boone went over the Cumberland Range and saw, with inspired foresight, the soil and the opportunities of the Kentucky valleys. From 1773 the tributaries of the Mississippi have fed the Middle West with the vitality of American ambition, just as at this present time the power of their falling waters is taking up the burden of electric transportation, of watering vast crops, of bearing the products of the industry of twenty-five million American toilers.

Science has determined well enough, as a commercial proposition, the character and limitations, the costs and profits, the facts and influences regarding the Mississippi; but it is fascinating to dream and to speculate on the things that might follow adequate development and use of the Mississippi. The impulse of turning the river's full force into American industry cannot be measured, nor its effect foreseen.

As it is, many thousands have been inspired to action by the mere spectacle of the wonderful torrent and its banks; from Daniel Boone as a hunter and pioneer to James B. Eads as a builder and engineer, from George Washington as a promoter of a vast area's development to the Mississippi River Commission as a conqueror of unbridled floods; from mere pleasure-seekers and shanty-boat dreamers to the students of human trends and efforts, seeking the explanation of success and failure through the study of nature and of history.

The Mississippi River as a force in the development of America has been constant and overwhelming. There is a whole literature based upon it, and from that literature have come some of the most interesting ideals and notions of the American people. For seventy years, unchallenged, a great traffic followed its gentle incline of six or eight inches to the mile.

To-day the timber of the hickories from its bottoms are the spokes of automobiles, and the handles of golf-clubs are sought among the dark corners of its brakes. Millions eat its fish, and the sheen of pearls from its tributaries delights countless women. There is scarcely a garment in the country that might not be improved by a button from a Mississippi clam-shell.

Whatever men may do to the Mississippi, the Father of Waters does not neglect their interests, nor does he fail to rebuke their impertinences and to stimulate their imagination.

Hole-in-the-Wall Barrett

BY MAX BRAND

Illustrated by Paul Stahr

IF this story were not fact it would not be written. It is too incredible for fiction. The best proof of its reality is the very fact that it is incredible, but if further proof is wanted it may be obtained from the twelve good men and true who formed the jury at the trial of Harry McCurtney. If they will not do, certainly Judge Lorry is an unimpeachable witness.

The story has to do with probably the oldest combination known to stories—a hero, a villain, and a beautiful woman. The hero was young, handsome, talented; the villain was middle-aged and rather stout, and smoked big black cigars; the beautiful woman was very beautiful.

Whatever the reader may think, this is *not* a motion-picture scenario. However, it sounds so much like one that it might as well start in the movie way.

The camera, therefore, opens on a close-up of the middle-aged villain. As the round spot of light widens, every one can see that the man is a villain. The way he chews that long black cigar, for instance, emitting slow, luxurious puffs, is sufficient proof.

No one but a villain really enjoys good tobacco; but to pile Pelion on Ossa, there are other proofs—lots of them. He has a square, bulging jaw, a straight-lipped, cruel mouth, a great hawk nose, and keen eyes buried under the overhanging shelter of shaggy brows. He is frowning in his villainous way and looking down.

The spot of light widens still further and includes the beautiful woman. She is very, very beautiful; a black-haired type with questioning, dark eyes. She is dressed in black, too, filmy over the arms, so that the rose tint of flesh shines through. She reclines in an easy chair with her head pillowed gracefully and canted somewhat to one side, while she studies the villain and defies him.

One notices her slender-fingered hand drooping from the arm of the chair, and compares it with the big fist of the villain, wondering how she can have the courage to defy him. She seems to know all about him. Well, she ought to. She is his wife.

The camera now opens out to the full and one sees the room. It is very big. There is a soft glimmer of diffused light, which is brightest on the corner of the grand piano and the slightly gray head of the villain. His big feet are planted in the thick texture of a rug. An arched doorway opens upon a vista of other rooms fully as sumptuous as this one. Proof positive that the man is a villain! He is too rich to be good.

The woman is talking. She leans forward with a smile that would win the heart of an armored angel—one of Milton's kind; but the man still frowns. It is easy to see that he is going to refuse her request—the beast! She concludes with a gesture of infinite grace, infinite appeal.

This is what she said:

"So you see, John, it was really a good act on the part of Harry to rid the world of that unspeakable uncle of his. Why, there isn't a soul in the city with a single kind word for that old miser, William McCurtney! He never did a gentle act. He broke the heart of his wife and killed her. He has kept poor Harry in penury."

The villain removed the black cigar from his teeth with a singularly unattractive hand. It looked as if it had been used all his life for grabbing things—and then holding them. His eyes burrowed into the face of the beautiful woman as if it made not the slightest difference to him whether he was speaking to his wife or not.

"This is the case," he said. "Harry McCurtney killed his uncle, William McCurtney. He did it by putting poison in the Scotch whisky which old William was drinking to the health of his nephew. A

maid saw Harry put something into his uncle's glass. She afterward got hold of the vial of poison, out of which only a few drops had been poured. There was enough left to kill ten men. When old McCartney died that night, the maid called in the police and had Harry arrested. She produced the vial of poison as evidence. The case was easily made out. A druggist has sworn that the poison was purchased from him by young Harry McCartney. To-morrow the jury is certain to bring a verdict of guilty against this man. That, in brief, is the case of the man you want me to defend."

"Your brevity," said his wife, "has destroyed everything worth while in the case. You have left out the fact that William McCartney was a heartless old ruffian—a miser, hated by every one and hating every one. You have left out the fact"—here her voice lowered and grew musically gentle as only the voice of a woman of culture can grow—"you have left out the fact, John, that Harry McCartney is a rare soul, an artist, a man unequipped for battling with the world. With the fortune he inherits from his uncle he would lead a beautiful, an ideal existence. He would do good to the world. He is—he is—a chosen spirit, John!"

"And he murdered his uncle," said John Barrett, "while old William was drinking his nephew's health and long life."

"That is an absurd and brutal way of stating it," said Mrs. John Barrett. "You cannot reduce the troubles of a delicate and esthetic soul to such a bald statement of fact."

"I should have to be a poet to do him justice?"

"You would."

"However, it is a waste of time to attempt to defend this fellow. I've seen the evidence. He'll hang!"

His wife rose from her chair and stood facing him. All the color went from her face; she seemed to have been painted white with a single stroke of an invisible brush.

"He must not hang! John, you can defend him. I've seen you win more impossible cases than this. I remember the Hanover trial. John Hanover was guilty. All the world knew it; but all the evidence of his guilt came from one witness. On the last day, before the case went to the jury, you put the witness for the prosecution on the stand. I'll never forget it! You drew

him out. You seemed hopeless of winning your case; you seemed to be questioning him simply as a matter of form to justify the collection of your fee. And the witness grew very confident. Finally you asked him the color of the necktie which Hanover was wearing when he committed the crime. The witness said without hesitation:

"A red tie with white stripes."

"With that you clapped your hand over your own necktie, sprang to your feet, pointed a melodramatic hand at the witness, and thundered in your court-room voice:

"What color is the necktie that I'm wearing?"

"The witness was dumfounded. He couldn't tell. Then you turned to the jury and discredited all that witness's testimony. You said you had been wearing the same necktie day after day in court, and the witness didn't know what its color was. Then how could he be sure of the color of the necktie which Hanover wore, when he had only seen Hanover for a few seconds, committing the murder? It showed that the man was giving valueless testimony; that he was lying out of hand. And the jury acquitted your man. John, you can do some miraculous thing like that now for my friend, Harry McCartney. You'll find some way. Why else are you called Hole-in-the-Wall Barrett?"

While she completed this impassioned appeal, John Barrett regarded her with utter unconcern. He might have been listening to the accomplishments of some fabulous character rather than to one of his own most spectacular exploits.

"To be brief, Elizabeth," he said, "I won't take the case. I've other work planned for to-morrow."

And he turned to leave the room.

Who but a villain could have turned his back on such a woman and at such a time? She stiffened; her head went back; there was a tremor of coming speech in her throat. "She is about to play her last card," a gambler would have said, and she played it.

"John!" she called.

The villain turned only half toward her at the door.

"There is another reason why you must defend McCartney," she said. "I love him!"

It sufficed to make the villain turn squarely toward her, but he showed not



HE EXTENDED AN ARM OF COMMAND OVER THE JURY, WHICH HAD RISEN TO THE LAST MAN, STARING UPON HIM WITH—

the least emotion. His head bowed a little, thoughtfully.

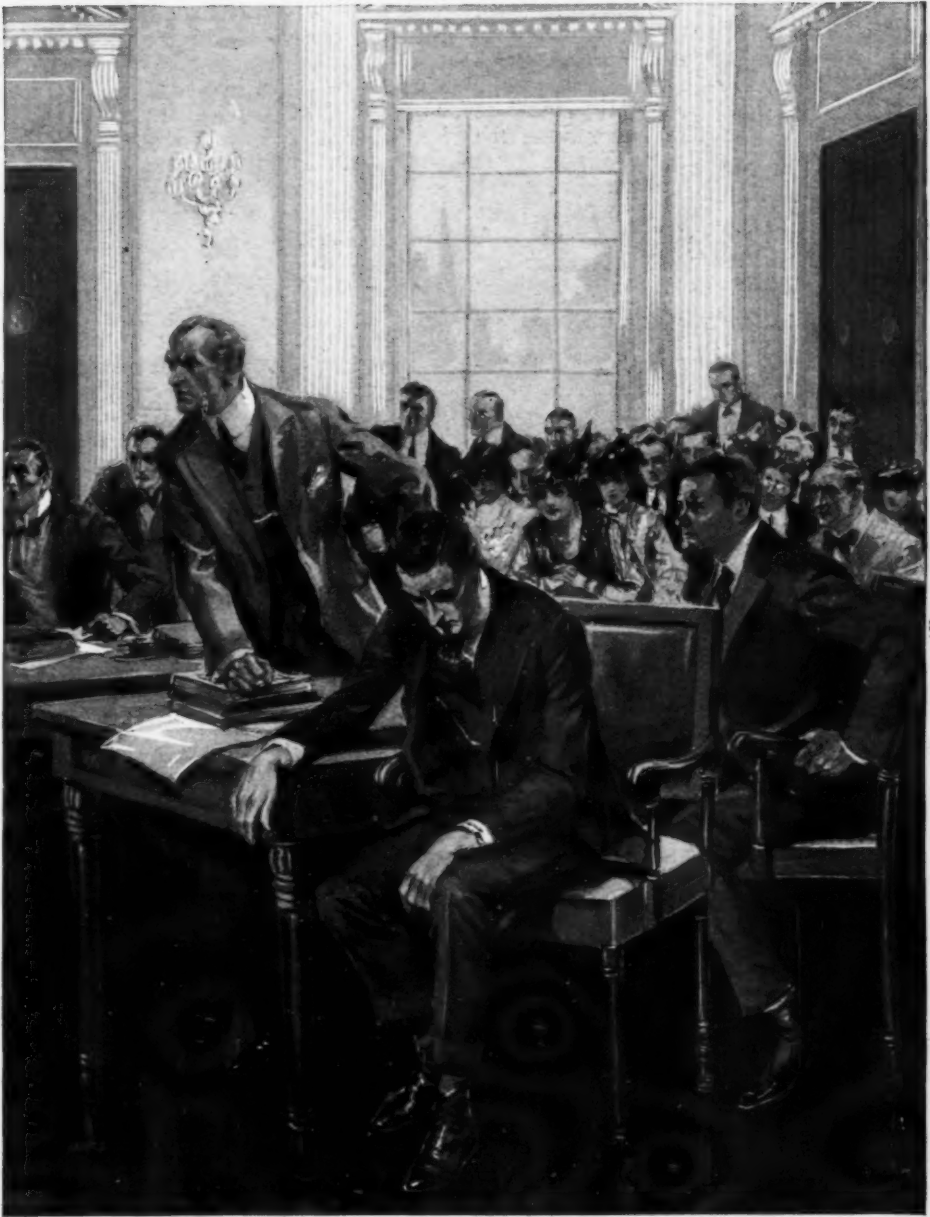
"Ah!" he repeated. "You love him?"

And with that he shifted his glance up suddenly and met her eyes. She shrank back, trembling. One could see that she

was expectant of a blow, a torrent of abuse. Instead, he smiled slowly at her.

She made a little gesture. There seemed more appeal than anger in it.

"You don't care, John? I knew you didn't care!"



—PALLID FACES AND OPEN MOUTHS. "NOW SET THAT MAN FREE!" HE THUNDERED, AND STRODE FROM THE COURT-ROOM

"If you love him," said the villain slowly, "I suppose I don't care."

"You never have," she answered. "You merely bought me—with your court-room eloquence, and your money—just as you would buy a fine piece of furniture. You

wanted a decorative wife for your home—some one you could be proud to show."

It was not a quarrel, you see. For it happened in the twentieth century; happened yesterday, in fact. Neither of them raised their voices. There fell a little si-

lence, and silences always make a woman explain.

"I've tried to love you," she said. "I've tried to break through that hard exterior you wear like armor. I've guessed at depths and tendernesses in you, but the only time I've heard poetry in your voice was when you said before the minister, 'I will!' Since then I've waited for a touch of that sound to come back into your voice, but it never has, and gradually I've learned the truth—you never really cared for me."

John Barrett was a villain; also a vulgar man.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating," he said. "If I haven't seemed to love you, why—I haven't."

And he grinned; it was not by any means a smile. She shuddered as if those hands of his, made for gripping great burdens, had closed on a vital nerve that ran to her heart. She turned away, veiling her eyes with her hand. Surely it was strange that a man could give up such beauty!

"And will you defend him?" she asked in a whisper.

"If you love him," said Barrett, "I shall set him free for you. Good night, Elizabeth!"

He strode out of the room. She ran after him a few steps and followed him with her eyes down the long vista of the rooms; but the massive shoulders went on their way with characteristic swagger; the bowed thoughtful head never once cast back a glance toward her.

"It is done!" said the beautiful woman, and sank into a chair.

Her eyes were half closed, and she smiled—the smile of the twentieth-century woman, which is harder to read than the smile of the Sphinx.

II

THE next afternoon she sat in a front seat in the court-room and bent eyes of sad sympathy upon Harry McCartney. There were others who looked on him in the same way. They were not, to be sure, quite like the beautiful woman, but then they were fair enough to have filled up a motion-picture background.

What woman under thirty could look upon him without some such sad emotion? He was very young; he was very handsome. The brown eyes were as soft and liquid as the eyes of a thoughtful Byron—or a calf. That tall forehead and that

long, pale face—they brought home all the romantic melancholy of life to a woman under thirty. Even the twelve good men and true felt some ruth as they glanced on him who was about to die; but being hard-headed fellows, those twelve, they looked away again and cleared their throats and frowned. Metaphorically speaking, they were rolling up their sleeves and preparing to grasp the knife from the hands of blind justice.

The hero knew it. He turned those large, soft eyes on the jurors, and then flicked them swiftly away and let them journey from one fair face to another along the benches of the court-room. And at last, as one overcome by the woes of life, he bowed his head and veiled his eyes with his long, white, tremulous fingers. A beautiful hand! It should have rested upon velvet; should have toyed with locks of golden hair, or blue-black hair—Elizabeth's hair was blue-black.

The crowd had not come to hear the plea of Hole-in-the-Wall Barrett, simply because it was not known until the last moment that he was taking over the case for the defense; but the moment his burly figure appeared, swaggering toward a chair, a hum and then a whisper and then a voice passed through the crowd. His honor removed his glasses and frowned. The clerk rapped for order.

From that moment every one waited; every one was expectant. The prosecution was uneasy; the district attorney drank many glasses of water; the jurors set their teeth as if they were resolving their collective minds that they *would* not be budged from their duty even by a John Barrett. They scowled and nudged one another with assurances of immovability; they smiled upon the district attorney; they frowned upon Harry McCartney and John Barrett.

The proceedings passed quickly. The district attorney made a very eloquent speech, painting in colors of crimson and black the damnable crime of this treacherous boy who could poison his uncle while the murdered man was drinking his nephew's long life and happiness. The jury shook its collective head and scowled again on John Barrett, as if they dared him to come on and fight now. But all the time Hole-in-the-Wall Barrett sat teetering slowly back and forth in his armchair, staring blankly from face to face and picking his

teeth. As has been said before, he was not only a villain, but a very vulgar man.

The prosecutor's case was in. There was only the plea of John Barrett to be heard. The judge frowned his defiance on Barrett; the district attorney did likewise; the jury deepened its scowls; the fair mourners covered their faces and waited.

conclusively that certain drops from this bottle were poured by the defendant into a glass of whisky, which was drunk by William McCartney, who thereafter died."

It was like the fall of the first sods on



"BRING ELIZABETH TO MY HOUSE, MCCURTNEY," RAN THE NOTE. "I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU BOTH"

Barrett rose in the most matter-of-fact manner, with the most unmoved face, and crossed to the table on which stood the damning exhibit, the vial of poison. He finished picking his teeth, but continued to chew the toothpick. Indeed, he was a very vulgar man.

"Your honor and gentlemen of the jury," he said, "the prosecution has proved

the coffin. The defense was throwing down its cards. McCartney raised his head; a greenish-yellow was invading the pallor of his poetic face. Something extremely unpoetic was in his eyes.

"The court has been informed by various experts that the contents of this bottle are deadly poison. If they are, unquestionably the defendant is guilty of murder, most damnable murder."

It was a strange exordium. The crowd frowned with wonder and waited for the appeal which must follow—sounding periods, moving eloquence. But it must be always remembered that our villain was a most vulgar man.

He raised the little vial.

"The proof of the pudding," he said, "is in the eating."

And he drank the liquid in the vial—he drained it slowly to the last drop. Then he turned and extended an arm of command over the jury, which had arisen to the last man, staring upon him with pallid faces and open mouths.

"Now set that man free!" he thundered, and strode from the court-room.

The man was set free. The jury was out one and one-half minutes before it reached its verdict. And the first one to get to the acquitted man, who sat as if stunned, with wandering eyes, was Elizabeth Barrett. Love will find a way, even through a court-room jam.

A note was brought to McCurtney; they read it together.

"Bring Elizabeth to my house, McCurtney," ran the note. "I have something to say to you both."

As they sat in her car, she said:

"He knows, Harry!"

"Knows what?" asked Harry.

"About us," said Elizabeth tenderly.

"About which?" said the hero vaguely.

"About our love, dear," explained the beautiful woman.

"My God!" said the hero. "Stop the car! Turn it about!"

"Harry!" cried the beautiful woman.

"You aren't afraid?"

"Afraid?" stammered the hero. "No, of course not!"

"Poor dear! Of course that hideous trial has destroyed your nerves; but think of the long years of beautiful peace which we will spend together!"

"John Barrett!" muttered the hero.

"He knows?"

"I told him."

"Elizabeth, were you mad, to tell that brute of a man?"

"He didn't care. In fact, that's how I induced him to defend you."

The hero wiped his brow.

"He won't oppose," said the beautiful woman, and she looked out the window with something of a sigh. "He won't hinder us in anything. I suppose—I suppose the divorce will be easily granted me. And then—"

"Yes, yes!" murmured the hero. "But let's talk about that later. The important thing now is John Barrett."

"We'll talk to him in a moment. It won't take long. I suppose he wants to make the necessary arrangements for the— the divorce."

She leaned back against the cushion and smiled that twentieth-century smile.

"By Heaven!" said the hero. "I don't really know whether you're glad or sorry, Elizabeth."

"Neither do I," she answered, and then, opening her eyes suddenly to the matter of fact: "Neither do I know whether I'm gladder to have my freedom, or sorrier to wade through the disgrace of the divorce-court."

"H-m!" said the hero.

The car stopped in front of the columned entrance to the Barrett home.

"Aren't you coming, Harry?" she asked with some impatience.

"Give me time, dear," said the hero.

"My wits are still back there in the court-room waiting for John Barrett to begin his appeal."

"And mine," said the beautiful woman, "are in the bright future!"

And again she smiled the twentieth-century smile.

III

THEY entered, and a servant told them that Mr. Barrett expected them in his private library. They climbed to the third story.

"This climb," smiled Elizabeth, when they arrived, a little breathless, at the door, "is the only thing, I'm sure, which keeps John from becoming stout."

"H-m!" said the hero.

They entered, and the door clicked behind them. It was a circular room, with a vaulted ceiling. The walls were lined with unbroken rows of books. There was not even a window; the air came through two ventilators. John Barrett stood in front of an open fireplace with his back to them, so that they could not tell, at first, exactly what he was doing there.



THE POKER SPARKLED AND GLITTERED AND RADIATED SNAPPING SPARKS IN SHOWERS; IT SEEMED INSTINCT WITH A TERRIBLE LIFE, A VOLITION OF ITS OWN. "GOD!" WHISPERED THE HERO AND COWERED AGAINST THE LOCKED DOOR

"We are here, John," said Elizabeth in a rather thin voice.

"Oh!" boomed Hole-in-the-Wall Barrett. "Are you here?"

And as he turned half toward them they discerned his employment—he was heating the end of a stout poker in a bed of white-hot coals.

"Good God!" whispered the hero.

He seized the knob of the door; but it did not budge. He could not even elicit a rattle from it when he shook it frantically.

"The door locks with a spring," explained John Barrett, turning squarely toward them, and still twirling the poker in the coals.

"Help!" yelled the hero.

"Harry!" said the beautiful woman in some disdain.

"It is often necessary for me to hold the most secret conferences here," said the villain, "and therefore I have had these walls built so thick that no sounds can enter or leave. The room is impervious to noise. It is necessary, because some really strange things have happened here."

"What do you mean?" said the hero, his voice changed beyond recognition.

"It is a suggestion," said the impassive villain, "for those who desire privacy. A room like this, for instance, would be ideal for writing your poetry, McCurtney."

"John!" said the beautiful woman sharply. "What are you driving at?"

In that vulgar atmosphere it was no wonder if she had learned to use slang. The hero, however, did not seem to notice it. His curiosity, for the moment, overwhelmed any other emotions.

"How in the name of Heaven," he said, "did you survive that poison?"

"Was it poison?" queried the villain. "Well, albumen coagulates and collects around certain poisons. I had swallowed several raw eggs just before I entered the court-room. It is not a new trick. The moment I left I was taken by two doctors to a private room, and my stomach was pumped out."

"Oh!" said the hero scornfully. "I thought it was some *ingenious* thing you did!"

"Oh!" said the villain. "Did you?"

"John, why have you sent for us?" said the beautiful woman.

Barrett buried the poker in the coals so deep that it would not topple out, pro-

duced one of his villainous long cigars and lighted it. He then picked up a riding-whip which had fallen to the floor, and hung it again above the fireplace.

"It is about your leaving," said the villain, and took the handle of the poker.

"Have you made up your mind to oppose me?" she asked.

"If you love this man," he said in his calm voice, "I sha'n't raise a hand to stop you or to hinder your happiness. I would even drink poison again to help you along."

"You?" said the beautiful woman.

"Because I love you," said the villain.

"You?" said the beautiful woman.

"Rot!" said the hero.

"But," went on the villain, "if you really care for this fellow here—this sneaking cur who makes my hands itch—if you really care for him, I'm sure that I can get along without you."

"Do you mean—?" cried the hero.

"I mean, Elizabeth," said the villain, "that I've probably made many mistakes in my treatment of you. I've never been a man of many words—outside the court-room. I've usually depended on actions instead. After I married you, I didn't think you required more proofs of my love. If you do, I'll try to give them to you—not in words, because this is not a court-room; but I want you to know that I've crossed the line from my old life and stepped into a new. This is the proof."

He drew out the poker from the coals. It sparkled and glittered and radiated snapping sparks in showers. The iron, indeed, seemed instinct with a terrible life, a volition of its own.

"God!" whispered the hero, and cowered against the locked door.

The beautiful woman said nothing at all.

Coming to a point half-way across the room, the villain took the glowing iron and with it seared a smoking furrow, crooked and deep, across the polished wood from one side of the room to the other. The mark still fumed when he stepped back and cast the poker clanging on the hearth. It was an ugly mark, and a melodramatic thing to do, but the villain was a vulgar man.

"If you doubt that I love you hereafter," said the villain, "don't wait for me to tell you, but come up here and look at this mark on the floor, Elizabeth. You've done to me what I've done here."

"John!" whispered his wife.

He turned his cigar and blew a cloud of smoke toward the ceiling. Truly, a very vulgar man!

"Elizabeth!" groaned the hero. "Are you going to leave me?"

"John!" whispered the beautiful woman, and she ran across the smoking furrow on the floor, stretching out her arms to her husband.

He removed his cigar.

"You will be able to open that other door," he said.

She opened the door and went out.

"And now?" asked the hero hoarsely.

"And now," said the villain, "I have always been a man of few words."

So saying, he took down the riding-whip from above the fireplace. The room was impervious to noise. It was necessary, because some strange things happened there.

Our Political Chiefs of Staff

TWO INTERESTING FIGURES IN POLITICS—WILL HAYS AND HOMER CUMMINGS,
CHAIRMEN OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEES OF THE TWO GREAT PARTIES

By J. Churchill Williams

HAVE you ever called on the chairman of your State central committee, or perhaps of the national committee of your party, and been prodigiously impressed by the retinue of outer and inner guards, the maze of approaches, the awesome mystery that enveloped the great presence?

Yes? Well, never again for you, you may have said. No? Then the chances are that you will never have just such an experience. For—let it be said with all reverence and respect for a great institution—the thing isn't being done that way any more.

I suspect it was really a bold effort to take advantage of the inborn disposition to marvel at that which is not understood, to set up an oracle which should command respect by its assumption of the atmosphere of the supernatural. The oracle might be hollow, with a cramped manhole through which a fat priest wriggled his way inside, and a sounding-board at the back of the head that gave a sepulchral timbre to the utterances that came through the stony lips. No matter, it was an oracle; and when it survived from ancient Greece to the modern G. O. P., it continued to be hollow, and likewise continued to keep its grip even on the vulgar herd who enjoyed the humbuggery.

The chairman might be plain Bill Smith to-day, given to expectoration of tobacco-

juice with unerring marksmanship; but tomorrow, in the atmosphere and vestments of political mystery, he commanded respect even at the hands of those who knew there was nothing inside his head but a sounding-board for sonorous phrases.

Well, that old stuff is all off. Politics is fallen on evil days. Common sense is succeeding to balderdash, simplicity to mystery, candor to bunk. We are in sight of a national campaign with all signs indicating that bosh is a back number, and that the methods of the every-day business man are going to succeed the incantations of the political medicine-man. "Blocks of five" are almost forgotten, the candidate's gratuitous cigar has been denaturalized, and hopeful souls even presume to foresee an epoch in which party platforms will be written with the purpose of conveying rather than concealing ideas.

Perhaps this is an unduly optimistic forecast, but it seems to have some justification in the personalities and the methods of the two gentlemen who at the moment are the national chairmen of the two major political parties. True, Will Hays and Homer Cummings may yet fall victims to a reactionary movement toward the older and traditional type of campaign manager. At the moment, however, these twain are in charge respectively of the Republican and Democratic national organizations, conducting the preliminaries of the great quad-

rennial contest of next year. They are just plain folks, running politics as they used to run their business, publishing a balance-sheet at intervals, having their accounts audited by experts, and sincerely trying to sell their respective lines of goods strictly on merit.

THE REPUBLICAN CHAIRMAN

Will H. Hays—let not the copy-reader or the compositor expand that Will into William, lest the Republican army lose its general—is really a new manifestation in big politics. He has never lived in a town larger than Sullivan, Indiana, in his life, and he has lived in Sullivan less than forty years. Probably half the men with whom he does business nowadays are as old as his father was when the elder Hays died a few months ago.

Will Hays lives in Sullivan because he doesn't want to live anywhere else. The Hays family is almost as much an institution there as the Wabash River is in that part of Indiana. Will's father, the late John T. Hays, planted himself there half a century ago and started to practise law. Sullivan was the county-seat of Sullivan County, a typical village of Western Indiana, with wide streets on which, if it didn't rain, the farmers from the county lined up their wagons on a Saturday morning and talked politics while their wives shopped, exchanging the week's butter and eggs for sugar and calico.

The elder Hays brought up his boys to believe that just as much life could be lived, and just as worth-while experiences enjoyed, in a small town as in a great city. While Will Hays was going through the Sullivan public schools and Wabash College, the father was gradually accumulating a law practise which ultimately made him not only the leader of the county bar, but spread over into the rest of Indiana, and even into the neighboring States of Illinois and Kentucky. A really great lawyer, he was constantly tempted with offers from firms in Indianapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, and Louisville. Most men would have found such calls irresistible, but the old gentleman had started in Sullivan, liked the town, its people, and its way of life, and steadfastly refused to be tempted.

His boys grew up to prefer Sullivan in the same whole-hearted fashion. The law firm became Hays & Sons, and Will Hays presently began to be known as the same

sort of thorough, successful lawyer that his father was.

If these lines fall under the eye of any cynical politician of the old school, I hope he will not be unduly shocked at the revelation I am about to make. The elder Hays was a pillar in the Presbyterian church of Sullivan, and Will not only went to church and Sunday-school regularly, but has been for a good many years the teacher of a Sunday-school class of young women. Within very recent time, he has been known to break away from a Saturday political powwow and travel four hundred miles in order to keep his engagement with that class the next day.

Withal, there was never any nonsense, any pretense, any hypocrisy about Hays. He has always been simply that sort of a chap. He didn't know any less about law or politics or business by reason of the fact that he never found time to look after a crop of wild oats. He took to politics as naturally as everybody else in Indiana does, and it was quite in the nature of things that he should be chairman of the county committee, and ultimately the representative of his Congressional district on the State central committee.

In 1912 the Indiana Republicans got a drubbing that convinced them of the desirability of a new deal. They wanted new men, young men, new ideas, in their politics. The Democrats had carried every Congressional district in the State, and Republican fortunes were at so low an ebb that there seemed little to lose by making an experiment. Why not give the young fellows a chance, and have Hays for chairman of the State committee?

WHAT HAYS DID IN INDIANA

So he was made chairman, and got his first set of spurs in the 1916 election, when the Republicans elected nine of the thirteen Congressmen from Indiana. People began to regard him as a boy wonder in politics. He continued chairman, and in 1918 elected a solid Republican Congressional delegation. After that they called him a plain wonder without the boy.

How did he do it? By the same methods that have since made him the universally accepted leader, as well as nominal head, of the Republican political organization in the nation. He sincerely believed in decent politics. He told the truth, did not try to buy nominations or elections, and made the



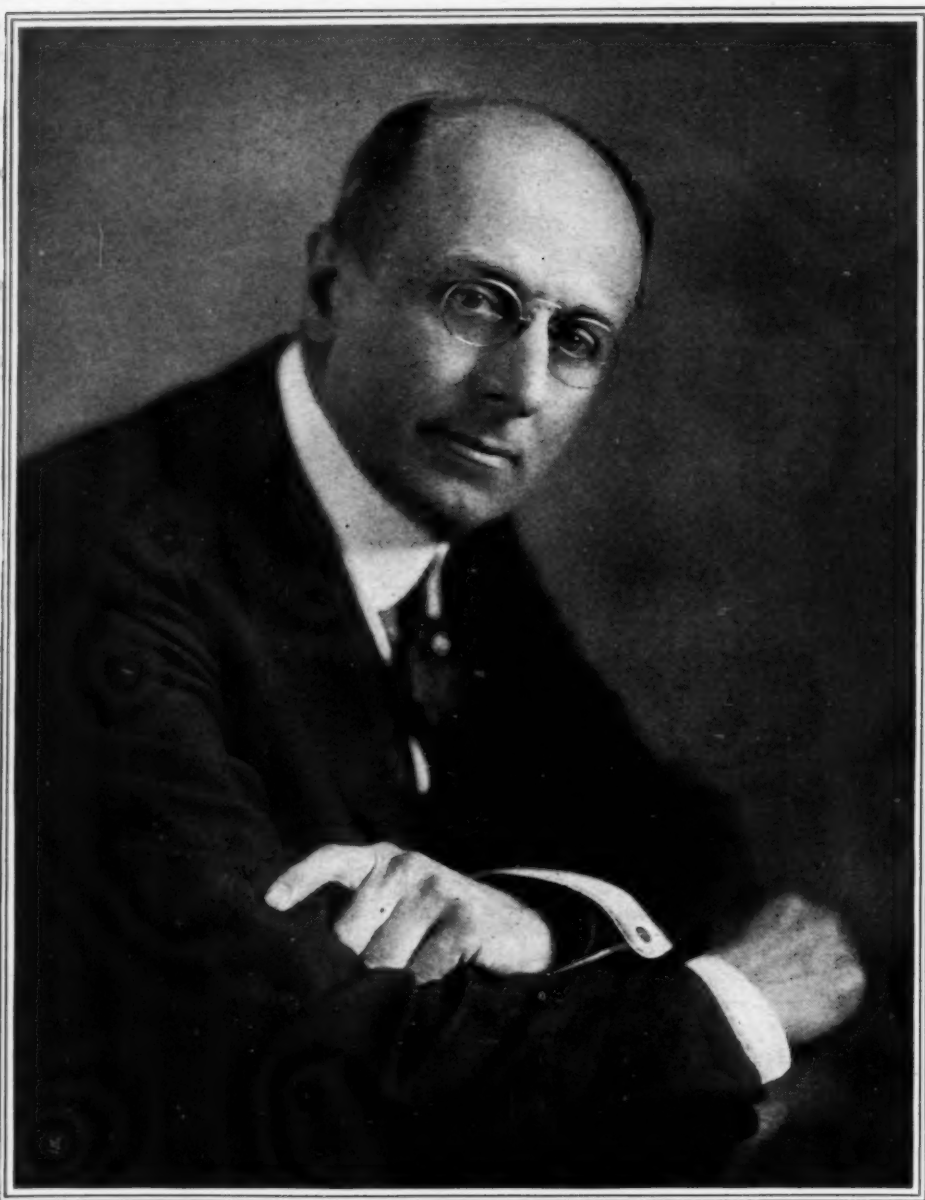
WILL HAYS, THE LAWYER FROM SULLIVAN, INDIANA, WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

From a photograph by the Western Newspaper Union, New York

people trust him. He believed and believes that the way to win is to make real issues and then be on the right side of them.

At the beginning of last year William R. Willcox, chairman of the Republican Na-

tional Committee since 1916, resigned, and it became necessary to select a successor. The committee held a big conference at St. Louis, and Hays was chosen. He had never been ambitious for a national political



HOMER S. CUMMINGS, THE LAWYER FROM STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT, WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington

career, his sole aspiration being the Governorship of Indiana. To that position he still aspires, and it is quite within the possibilities, his friends declare, that next year he may occupy the unique position of being his party's nominee for Governor of the State while simultaneously conducting a

Presidential campaign as chairman of the Republican National Committee.

At any rate, the results of the 1918 election put him definitely in the front rank of successful political managers. Whether he will conduct the national campaign of next year depends, of course, on the nom-

inee, for it is a tradition that a Presidential nominee should be permitted to name his own chairman.

Since he has been national chairman, Mr. Hays has worked hard at his job, and has well-nigh lived in sleeping-cars and hotels. He has applied on a nation-wide scale the same ideas of "organization" that he used first in Sullivan County and afterward in the State of Indiana. His notion of politics is to find out what the people want, and to be square with them.

Personally, he is tall and thin, looks like Lord Robert Cecil, and has precisely Lord Robert's habit of coiling up his long legs when he sits down, so that everybody near him becomes subconsciously fearful that in the effort to straighten them out, when he gets up, he may break one of them.

THE DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN

The Democratic national chairman, Homer S. Cummings, of Connecticut, is of the same type of business man in politics. He was born in Chicago forty-nine years ago, of old New England stock. He is a graduate of Yale, and has been not only an eminently successful lawyer but an important figure for a good many years in Connecticut politics. He has twice been mayor of his home town of Stamford, in the southwestern corner of the State, just beyond the suburban radius of New York. He has also served four years as corporation counsel of Stamford.

Homer Cummings is one of those men who give the impression of having what the writers of character-sketches always refer to as reserve force, but what some other folks are wont to describe as a regular punch. Not many men can gain a political reputation from being more or less persistently beaten as candidates; but Cummings did. He ran for Secretary of State in 1896, and in 1902 for Congressman at large, and each time received more votes than were cast for any other Democratic candidate. Likewise, he had twice been the Democratic candidate for United States Senator, and continued his record of receiving the largest number of votes given to any candidate on the ticket.

While leading forlorn hopes in an almost hopelessly Republican State, he found time to engage also in organization politics. Twice, in 1900 and 1904, he was a delegate at large to the national convention, and has been Connecticut's member of the national

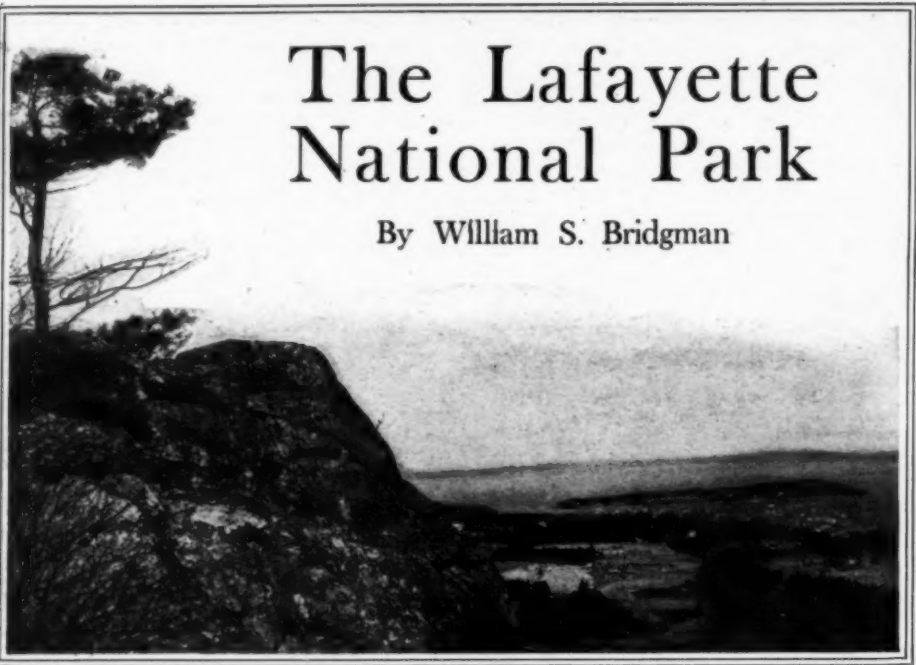
committee since 1900. In the last three national campaigns he has been chairman of the speakers' bureau—which, by the way, is one of the most difficult and thankless tasks that ever gets wished on a politician.

Like his Republican "opposite number," Mr. Cummings has had the genius for being a big man in spite of his preference for living in a small city. He started practising law in Stamford in 1893, and has lived there ever since.

These small-town politicians, with their faculty for knowing the people and living close to the grass-roots, will bear watching. They seem to have something that the bosses in the big towns have never quite got hold of. Mr. Cummings has it, just as Hays has it, and if it shall chance that both of them are national chairmen next year, they will give the country something new in its experience of big campaigns.

Only a man of unlimited enthusiasm and physical capacity could have engaged in the varied and constant political activities that have made up the spectacular part of Mr. Cummings's career, and at the same time have been able to achieve the large professional success that has come to him. Even now he is a member of the New York bar, and State's attorney for Fairfield County, Connecticut. He is an effective public speaker, but his political genius lies in his remarkable organizing talents. His methods are simple, straightforward, and wide open. He is a good deal more interested in issues than in jobs, and firmly believes that a good card-index is worth a lot more in a campaign than any number of whispered conferences behind closed doors.

Mr. Cummings was vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee in the campaign of 1916, when Vance McCormick was chairman; and when Mr. McCormick accepted an important appointment in war work, it was quite natural Mr. Cummings should succeed him at the head of the committee. Few men in the country come nearer to possessing what may be truly called a national acquaintance. At present he is devoting himself almost exclusively to the duties of the chairmanship, traveling extensively, studying the currents and drifts of public thought, and aiming to bring his party organization into harmony with the purposes and aspirations of the national mind.



The Lafayette National Park

By Willlam S. Bridgman

DISTANT VIEW OF BAR HARBOR AND FRENCHMAN'S BAY, FROM ONE OF THE ROCKY HILLS OF THE PARK

IF there is any one who questions the value or fails to understand the purpose of the national parks of the United States, he should read and consider a passage written a few years ago by one of America's grand old men, Charles W. Eliot, ex-president of Harvard. Speaking of the gradual occupation of the Maine coast by spreading colonies of summer residents and invading armies of sightseers, Dr. Eliot said:

The spectacle of thousands upon thousands of people spending several weeks or months of summer in healthful life by the seashore is very pleasant, but there is danger lest this human flood so overflow and occupy the limited stretch of coast which it invades as to rob it of that flavor of wildness which hitherto has constituted its most refreshing charm. It is not the tide of life itself, abundant though it be, which can work the scene such harm. A surf-beaten headland may be crowned by a lighthouse tower without losing its dignity and impressiveness; a lonely fiord shut in by dark woods, where the fog lingers in wreaths as it comes and goes, still may make its strong imaginative appeal when fishermen build their huts upon its shore and ply their trade. But the inescapable presence of a life, an architecture, and a landscape architecture alien to the spirit of the place may take from it an inspirational and recreative value for work-wearied men no economic terms can measure.

The United States have but this one short stretch of Atlantic seacoast where a pleasant

summer climate and real picturesqueness of scenery are to be found together; can nothing be done to preserve for the use and enjoyment of the great body of the people in the centuries to come some fine parts at least of this seaside wilderness of Maine?

Fortunately, in this particular instance, something has been done, and done in a very admirable way, to preserve for future generations the beauties of nature unspoiled and unmonopolized. The answer to Dr. Eliot's concluding question is the recent creation of the Lafayette National Park on Mount Desert Island, the largest and most picturesque of the almost countless wave-washed fragments that fringe the rocky coast of Maine.

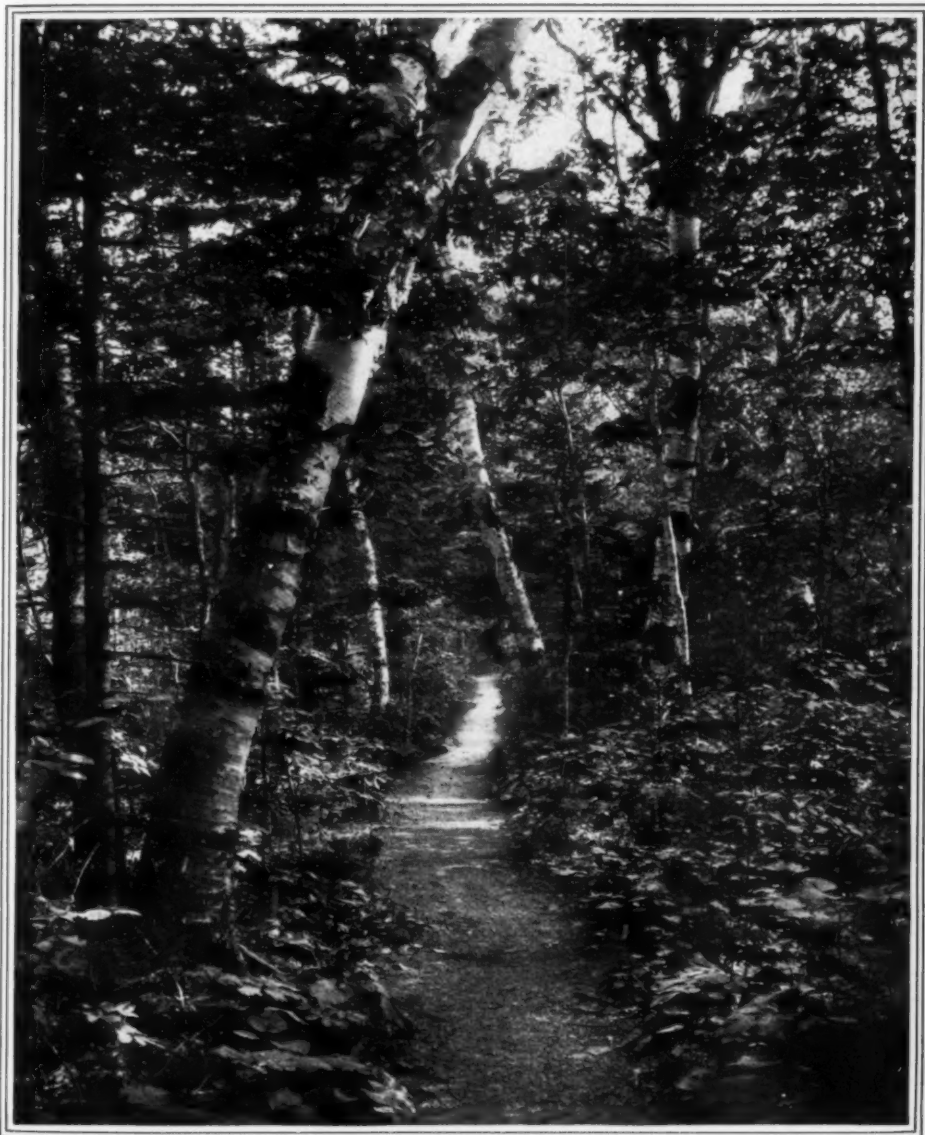
For several reasons this latest addition to the list of national parks is of special interest. Wonderful, and even matchless, as are many of our great scenic reservations, their value as truly national playgrounds has hitherto been seriously lessened by the fact that they are in the Western and Far Western States, remote from our great centers of population. Lafayette is the first park east of the Mississippi. Within a few hours, by train or boat, of Boston, within an easy day's journey of New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, it is already vis-

ited by more than fifty thousand people annually, and it is manifestly destined to give health and pleasure to a much larger number in the near future.

A REMNANT OF OLD ACADIA

Besides the beauty of its scenery and its value as a breathing-spot, the new park has several distinct phases of interest. It is closely associated with that heroic period

of American history, the era of the early French explorers. It is a remnant of old Acadia, and the spot where Samuel de Champlain made his first landing in what is now the United States, sixteen years before the Pilgrim Fathers set foot on the shore of New England. Champlain was then lieutenant and cartographer to the Sieur Pierre de Monts, who in December, 1603, was commissioned by the great Henry IV of



WHITE BIRCH-TREES ON SCHOONER HEAD PATH—SCHOONER HEAD AND GREAT HEAD ARE THE EASTERNMOST POINTS OF THE ISLAND, OVERLOOKING THE ENTRANCE TO FRENCHMAN'S BAY

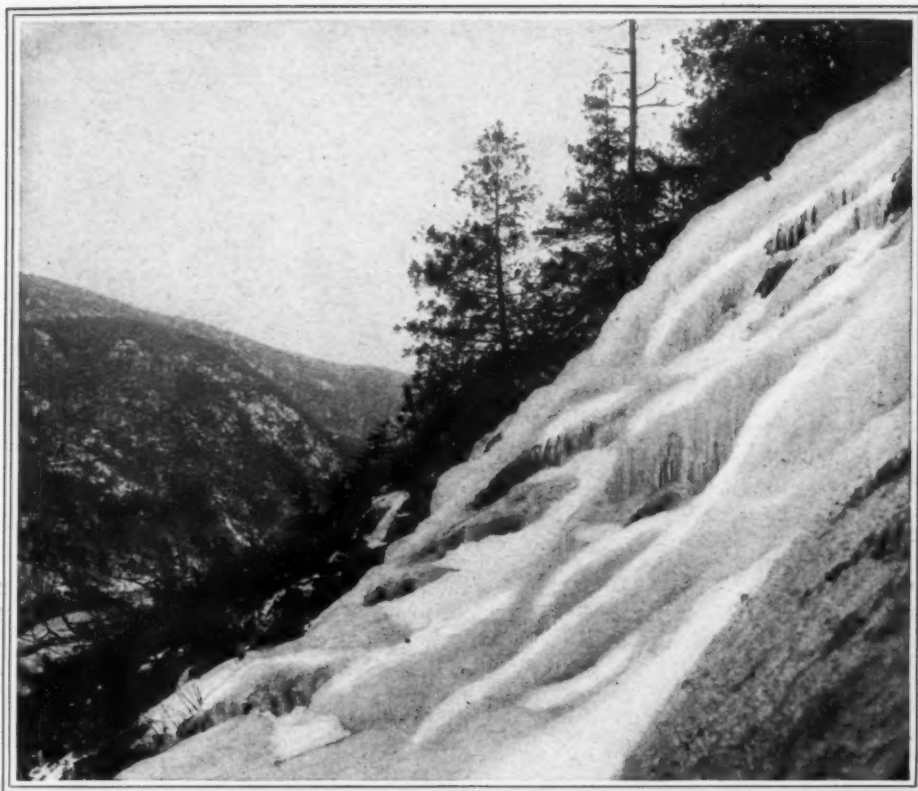
France to occupy and colonize "the lands and territory called Acadia," extending, as then defined, from the forty-sixth degree of latitude southward to the fortieth—roughly, from Cape Breton to the Delaware.

In the summer of 1604 the Sieur de Monts established his first post at the mouth of the St. Croix, now the northern boundary of the United States; and thence

he sent out Champlain, in a little boat carrying about a dozen men, to explore the coast to the south. Entering the inlet known to-day as Frenchman's Bay, Champlain's vessel was damaged by striking a hidden rock, and he ran her ashore on the island that forms the western side of the bay, near the present site of the town of Bar Harbor. The island, conspicuous for



PATHWAY ASCENDING DRY MOUNTAIN, WHICH IS TO BE RENAMED PEACE MOUNTAIN



WINTER IN THE LAFAYETTE NATIONAL PARK—ICE-CLAD ROCKS ON DRY MOUNTAIN

its lofty headlands with bare, rocky summits, he named the *Isle des Monts Déserts*, or Island of the Desolate Mountains. Getting afloat again, he was piloted by friendly Indians along the sheltered channels—"thoroughfares," they are locally called nowadays—to the Penobscot; and in his record he describes the island as a headland at the mouth of the river.

The first white settlement on the *Isle des Monts Déserts* was a missionary station established there by French Jesuits in 1608. Later the lordship of the island was granted by Louis XIV to Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac, who dwelt on it for a time before he moved westward to found Detroit and to become governor of the vast territory of Louisiana. In deeds that he signed in his later years he still described himself as "*Seigneur des Monts Déserts*."

During this period most of Maine was a disputed zone between the French provinces to the north and the British colonies farther south. The French, abandoning their pre-

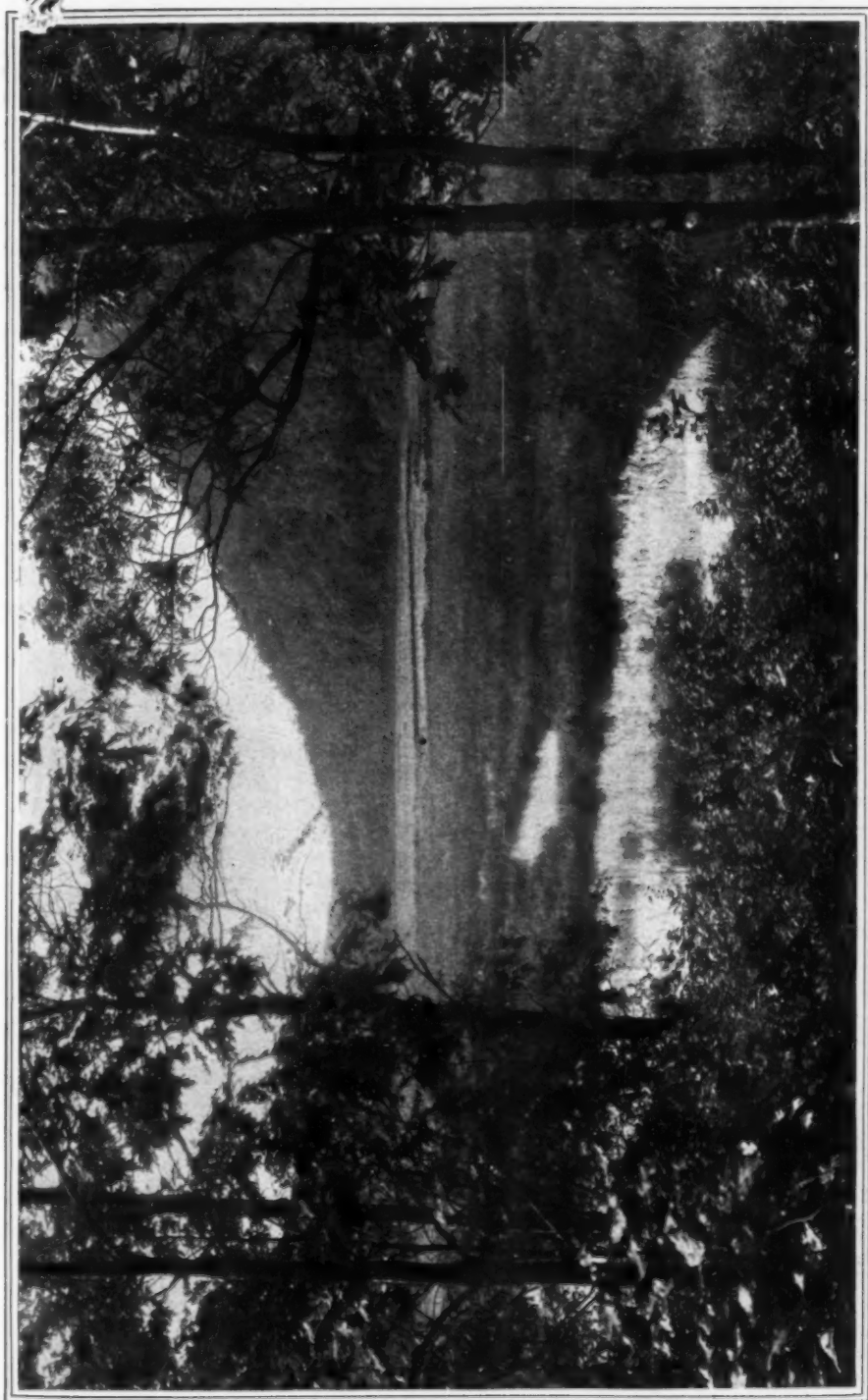
tension to a frontier on the Delaware, drew their southern boundary-line at the Kennebec, while the New Englanders—the "*Bostonnais*," as the French called them—claimed the coast as far north as the *St. Croix*. The question was finally settled in 1713 by the treaty of Utrecht, which made Acadia British, and the whole of Maine now fell under the jurisdiction of the colony of Massachusetts.

The next owner of the island to figure in history was Francis Bernard, Governor of Massachusetts, to whom it was granted by the colony in return for "extraordinary services." In October, 1762, Governor Bernard chartered a sloop and sailed from Boston to inspect his possessions. His diary, which is extant, thus records his landing on the shore of what he calls "the river"—meaning *Somes Sound*, the deep glacial fiord that pierces the island to its center:

Went up the river, a fine channel having several openings and bays of different breadths from a



VIEW FROM KERO MOUNTAIN, LOOKING EASTWARD—IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE BUILDING OF ARTS; IN THE DISTANCE, FRENCHMAN'S BAY,
WITH THE MAINLAND BEYOND IT

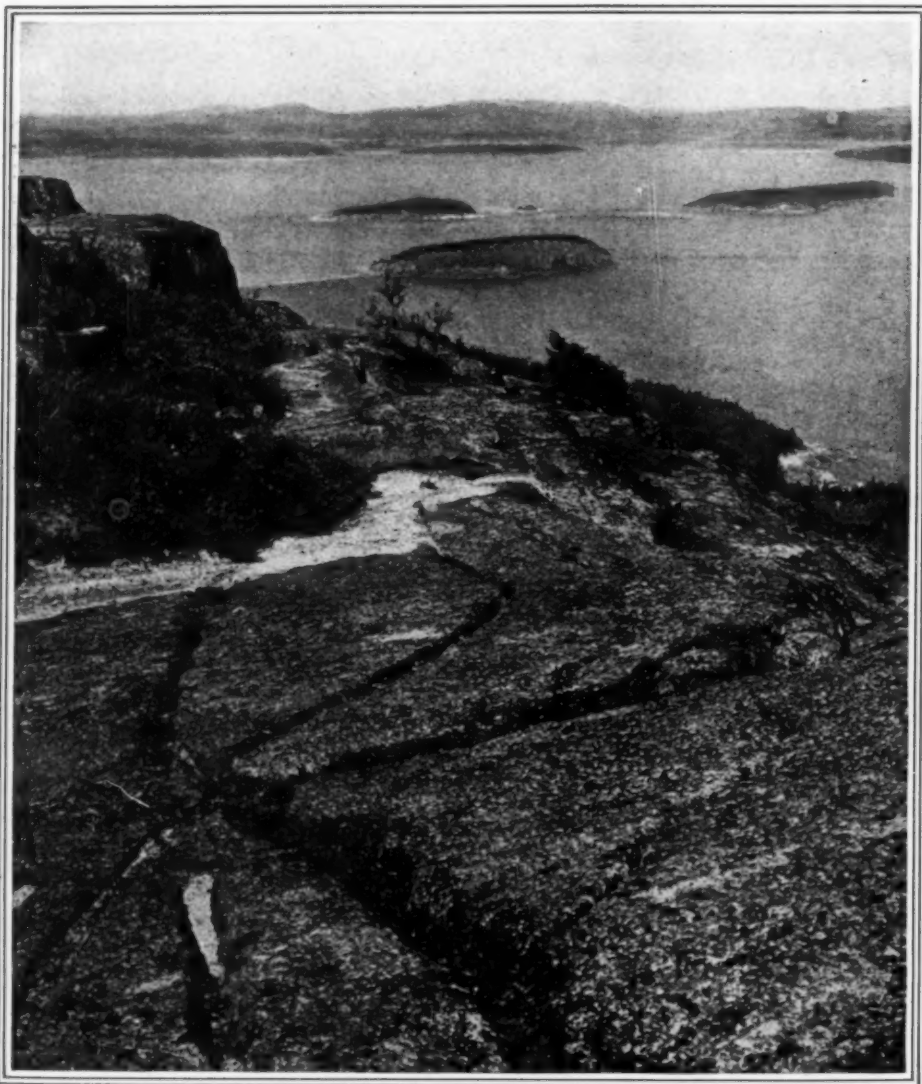


THE SIEUR DE MONT'S TARN, ONE OF THE MANY SMALL MOUNTAIN LAKES IN THE LAFAYETTE NATIONAL PARK—THERE WERE FORMERLY BEAVER COLONIES HERE, AND IT IS PROPOSED TO REESTABLISH THEM

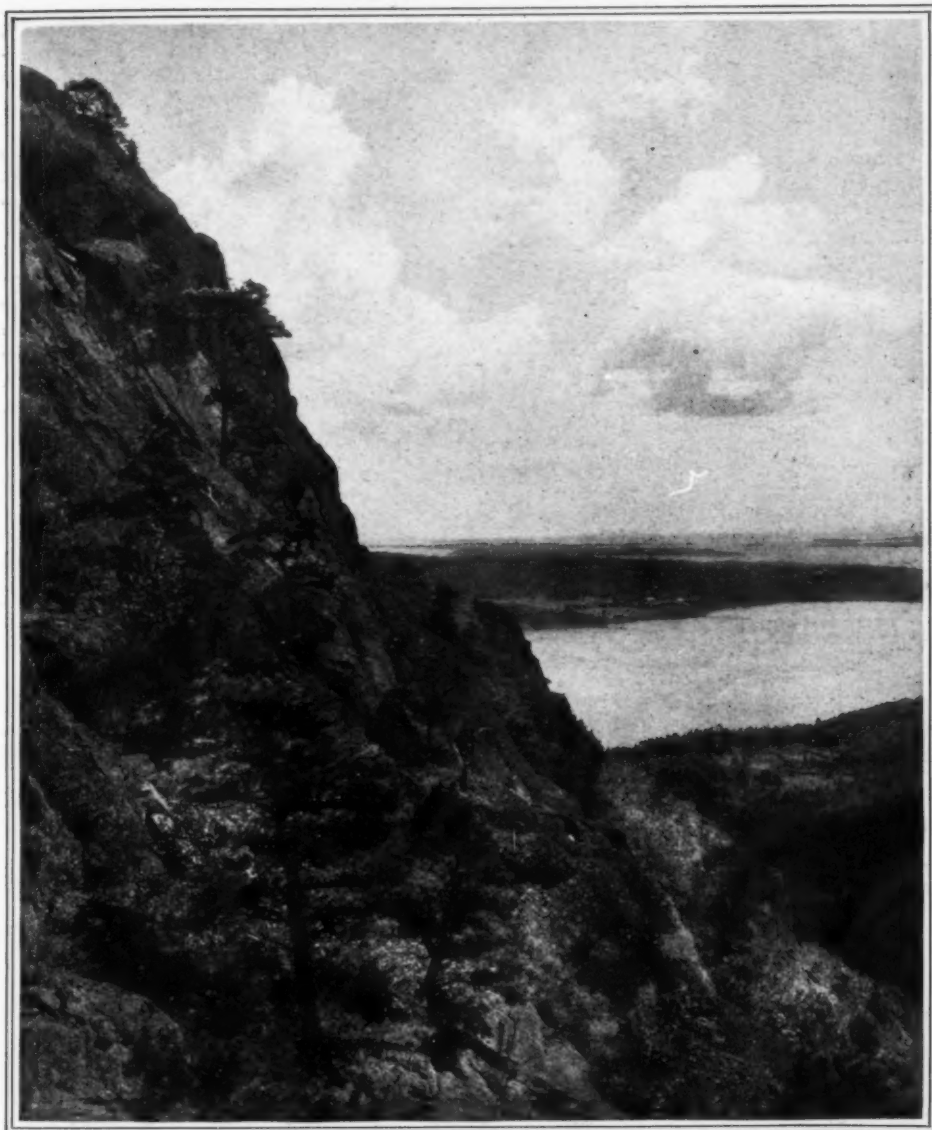
mile to a quarter of a mile. In some places the rocks were almost perpendicular to a great height. The general course of this river is north, five degrees east, and it is not less than eight miles long in a straight line. At the end of it we turned into a bay, and there saw a settlement in a lesser bay. We went on shore and into Abraham Somes's log-house, found it neat and convenient, though not quite furnished, and in it a notable woman with four pretty girls, clean and orderly. Near it were many fish drying.

The governor found half a dozen families settled on his domain, and received applica-

tions from several other would-be colonists. But the approach of the Revolution brought him other things to think of, and after the downfall of the old régime his island was confiscated by the State of Massachusetts. A few years later, however, the Legislature restored half of it to his son, John Bernard, and granted the other half to a granddaughter of Cadillac, Mme. de Grégoire, and her husband—two French *émigrés* on whose behalf Lafayette had interceded. M. and Mme. de Grégoire established their



GLACIATED ROCKS IN THE LAFAYETTE NATIONAL PARK—IN THE DISTANCE ARE THE ISLANDS OF FRENCHMAN'S BAY AND THE MAINLAND BEYOND



THE CLIFFS OF ACADIA MOUNTAIN (FORMERLY ROBINSON MOUNTAIN), LOOKING ACROSS SOMES SOUND TO NORTHEAST HARBOR AND THE OPEN SEA

home on the island, and died there; and from their grant the present titles to Bar Harbor property are derived.

WHERE SEA AND MOUNTAINS MEET

There is much more to be said about the island of the Sieur de Monts and of Cadillac, apart from its historical associations. Its special claims to distinction were well summed up by Secretary Lane in the official

letter in which he requested the House Committee on Public Lands to approve the bill establishing the park:

Scenically its impressive headlands give Mount Desert the distinction of combining sea and mountain. These headlands are by far the loftiest of our Atlantic coast. Their high, rounded summits, often craggy, and their splendid granite shelves form a background for a rugged shoreline and an island-dotted harbor which is one of the finest that even the Maine coast can present.

Back of the shore is a mountain and lake wilderness which is typical in a remarkable degree of the range of Appalachian scenery.

From the point of view of conservation, the value of the proposed park can hardly be overestimated. The forests are largely primeval. Oaks, beeches, birches, maples, ashes, poplars, and many other deciduous trees of our Eastern ranges, here found in full luxuriance, mingle with groves of pine and giant hemlock. The typical shrubs of northeastern America are in equal abundance. Wild flowers abound. There are few spots, if any, which can combine the variety and luxuriance of the Eastern forests in such small compass.

The rocks also have their distinction. This was the first part of the continent to emerge from the prehistoric sea. Archæan granites in original exposure such as these, though common in eastern Canada, are rare in the United States. Worn by the ice-sheets of the glacial period, eroded by the frosts and rains of the ages, their bases carved by the sea, their surfaces painted by the mosses and lichens of to-day, they are exhibits of scientific interest as well as beauty.

Still another distinction is Mount Desert's wealth of bird life. All of the conditions for a bird sanctuary in the East seem to be here fulfilled. Once Mount Desert was the home of many deer, some of which are now returning from the mainland. Moose haunt it still occasionally. Once its streams abounded in beaver, and will again after a few of these animals are planted in its protected valleys.

From a recreational standpoint, the Mount Desert Park would be capable of giving pleasure in the summer months to hundreds of thousands of people living east of the Mississippi River. The island is accessible by automobile, railroad, and boat, and is relatively few hours distant from many large Eastern cities. Developed as a national park in the interests of all the people, this reservation will become one of the greatest of our public assets.

One other point that must not be omitted is the fact that all the land in the Lafayette Park was presented to the government by its owners—which was the case with only one other of the half a hundred tracts that have been set apart as national parks or national monuments. Hereby hangs a story of much generosity and public spirit on the part of those who have contributed to the making of the new playground.

THE MAKING OF THE NEW PARK

The movement first took shape about ten years ago, when a number of summer residents incorporated the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations. The president of this body was Dr. Charles W. Eliot, president emeritus of Harvard, while Mr. George Bucknam Dorr, of Boston and Bar Harbor, was vice-president and the active moving spirit of the association. Among those who helped its work were such

men as Bishop Lawrence, of Massachusetts, the late Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, of Philadelphia, and Dr. Robert Abbe, Henry Lane Eno, and the late John S. Kennedy, of New York.

Partly by gifts, partly by purchase, the Hancock County Trustees acquired a continuous tract of five thousand acres in the wildest part of the island, which they offered to the government as a national monument, and which was accepted as such by President Wilson in July, 1916, the title then formally adopted being the *Sieur de Monts National Monument*, in honor of the first French proprietor. To establish a national park an act of Congress is needed, and the necessary legislation was secured last year. A provision of the bill authorized the Secretary of the Interior to accept additional lands or other gifts for the extension or improvement of the park, and already the original five thousand acres have been more than doubled. It is hoped to double the present area in the near future.

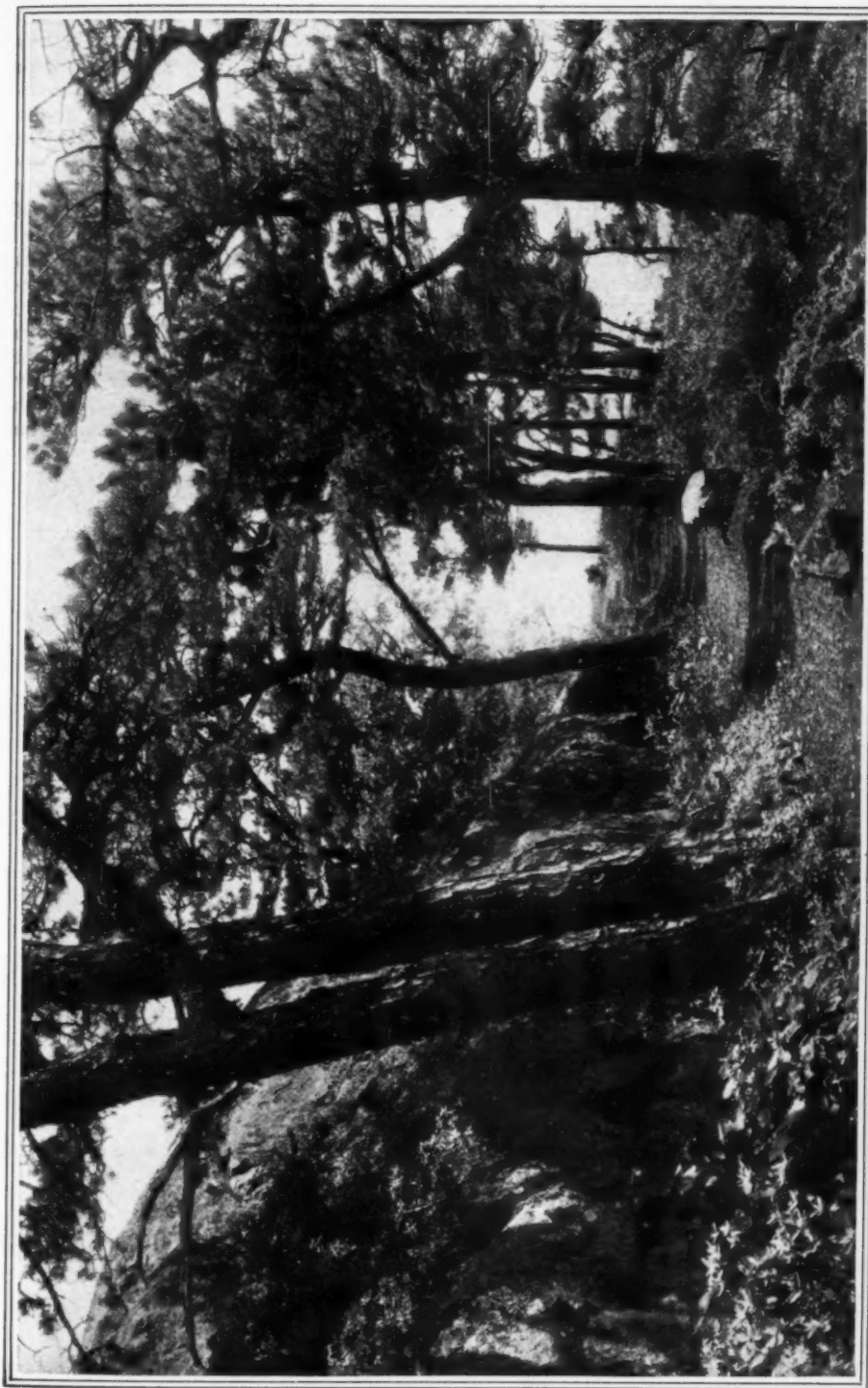
The "dollar-a-year men" who worked so unselfishly for the government during the war have received well-deserved praise, but they were not an entirely new phenomenon, for the National Park Service has long had public servants of the same type on its staff. One of them is the director of the service, Mr. Stephen T. Mather; another is Mr. Dorr, who has become custodian of Lafayette Park at a merely nominal salary. He spends most of his time there, living in a house that was his own contribution to the park, and he is devoting all his taste, skill, and energy to its development.

THE PARK'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Dorr thus expresses his general plan for the future of the park:

Our idea has been to develop it for the brain-workers of the country, people who would be responsive to the beauty and inspiration of its scenery, and who can get away for a brief or longer holiday. They are going there now, in numbers, but what we want to provide for specially is the need of people of moderate or narrow means who would appreciate what it has to give in beauty, interest, and climate. Areas are being selected within the park where similar buildings to those provided in the Western parks may be built in the future, as soon as funds are available for the park's development in connection with them.

It is confidently expected that before very long the visitors to Lafayette Park will



BEACHCROFT PATH, WINDING ALONG ONE OF THE ROCKY HILLSIDES OF THE LAFAYETTE NATIONAL PARK THROUGH A GROVE OF PITCH-PINES

number at least a quarter of a million annually. It is no simple or easy task to make a limited tract—limited, at any rate, in comparison with some of the spacious parks of the West—serve the needs of such a host and yet preserve its natural charms unspoiled. That, however, is what must and no doubt will be done on the rocky island of the *Sieur de Monts*. One of Mr. Dorr's ideas is to turn as many travelers and sojourners as possible from the land to the sea. As additions are made to the park, he hopes to secure landing-places along the coast that will offer a unique opportunity for excursions in picturesque and sheltered waters, suitable for yachts, house-boats, or canoes.

Mention should be made of another agency that is working for the benefit of

the park—a corporation called the Wild Gardens of Acadia, of which Dr. Eliot is president. Its object is to collaborate with the Federal authorities in establishing sanctuaries for the animal and plant life of the region—a purpose for which Lafayette Park is peculiarly suited by its climate, its location, and the peculiar formation of its rugged hills and its deep and sheltered valleys.

Secretary Lane was undoubtedly right in saying that this island park on our northernmost Atlantic coast promises to become one of the choicest possessions of the American people. It is a signal proof of the fact that a democratic government can by a wisely ordered policy provide its citizens with many of the finest things that wealth can buy or the world can offer.

MY BROOK

A GLORIOUS jest my brook has found,
And earth is gladder for the sound.
All day and night the silver throat
Is joyous with a gurgling note.

The very jays slink near to guess
The reason of that roguishness—
The pleasantry that, summer-long,
Hides, yet is patent, in its song.

I wish that I had only half
The mirth implicit in its laugh;
But how shall mortal be as gay
When men are what they are to-day?

Who taught the nimble waters all
The secret merriment they drawl?
The mother rain? The wayward breeze?
The winking stars? The comrade trees?

Who was the teacher? What the jest
So cryptic yet so manifest?
Something, perhaps, a faun once said
To set a dryad blushing red.

Or something deeper, yet as bright
As aught that gave the nymph delight—
Some drollery devised by Pan,
But not to be revealed to man;

Or some innate, essential mirth,
Drawn from the Attic salt of earth,
An element to give the heart
With nature its intrinsic part.

I do not know; I cannot tell
What entertains my brook so well.
It chuckles, chuckles to the wood—
I wish I knew a joke as good!

George Sterling

The Flibbertigibbet

BY WAKELEIGH RHODES

Illustrated by Gerald Leake

JEREMIAH was just a country Jake. He said so himself. He had big shoulders and strong muscles, but he did not have a trade, and his freckles and his wide smile and hair, which grew seven ways for Sunday, did not harmonize with the more decorative employments open to him in the city.

He knew nothing of "books" or "systems," and could not have told an index-file from a halyard-spike. Neither could he measure silks or ribbons with his big, horny hands, or try on dainty footwear for capricious dames. Even sugar and eggs had a way of slipping through his plow-calloused fingers, and he had just about decided that there was no room in the city for a willing spirit housed in the hulk of a country Jake, when his luck turned. And a good thing it did, too, for his home-knit, all-wool savings-depository was on the verge of ignominious collapse.

Greatly to his own surprise, Jeremiah found himself engaged to sell stoves in the basement of Goldschein's Department-Store. That was one place where brawn rivaled brain. He did not know much about stoves, but he could "heft" them around to the green-eyed wonder of a silk-socked floor-manager; also to the titillating and secret—*very* secret—admiration of the flibbertigibbet.

The flibbertigibbet was his opposite neighbor in the store.

With their usual taste for contrasts—green-plush rockers against red-velours drapes, women's lingerie next to kitchen linoleum, marshmallows and molasses chips backing transformations and three-stemmed switches—Goldschein Brothers had placed the near-cut-glass department between the stoves and the tinware. It was most artistic there—like a diamond set in platinum and black enamel, and the jewel-like effect served to heighten the effulgence of the

flibbertigibbet—if anything were needed for that.

The flibbertigibbet stood out among her fellows like a locomotive headlight in the midst of paper lanterns. Not only were her waists the filmiest, her V's the lowest, her earrings the longest, her skirts the shortest, and her shoes the most violent of any girl's in the basement; but her blond hair was yellower, her eyebrows blacker, her cheeks a more unchanging pink, her lips a more anilin red, and her nose and throat whiter. She was such a startling bit of rose and gold and alabaster that almost every man who passed her turned for a second look. The flibbertigibbet was not discriminating, however, and whether that look was bold or reproving, leering or knowing, awestruck or contemptuous, it was all grist of admiration to the little mill of understanding revolving in her fluffy head.

To the country Jake she was a vision of delight, and he never tired of gazing at the pink-and-white perfection of her, his heart in his unworldly eyes. At first she tittered openly at his clothes and his clumsiness and unsophistication, but by and by she only laughed behind his back. Such dumb adoration as his had its effect on even her blasé young heart.

How it ever happened Jeremiah could not explain, except by the oft-reiterated assertion that his luck had turned, but after a while, to quote the other clerks in Goldschein's, they began "going together"—which meant that he waited to walk home with her, and gave her shy offerings of peppermints and chewing-gum, or sassafras and johnny-jump-ups from the stoic squaw who squatted on the corner in the spring-time; and finally he plucked up courage to invite her to a movie, which meant calling for her at her domicile.

Here he met her mother, a thin, drab little woman with a large brood of younger

children, who no more gave the impression of having been able to bring forth such a rare jewel than a bit of rock suggests its hidden gold. Jerry was much taken aback at the contrast between them. He had unconsciously expected her mother to be a sort of humbler edition of the Queen of Sheba.

The mother, too, was visibly embarrassed, and the daughter audibly so.

"Gee, ma, ain't you had time to slick up yet?" she asked crossly, as the drab little woman made an unexpected appearance in the "settin'-room," moved by a maternal desire to look this new young man over.

"Why, no, I ain't," she apologized; "but I thought I'd like to meet your friend." She offered him a timid hand, while she searched his face with faded blue eyes that had once been as bright as her daughter's. "Buddy's teethin', an' don't want me to leave him a minute," she went on, referring to the fat and soiled baby straddling her hip. "It's kind of hard to get my work done this way. I—I thought maybe you'd take him an' give me a chance to—"

"Why, ma, *course* I can't! I told you we was goin' out."

The country Jake looked at the peevish baby, and did not wonder at her refusal—then. He tweaked Buddy's ear, and won a weak smile in response.

"Ma can't expect me to work all night. I've got to have a *little* amusement," the girl defended herself when they were on their way; and he was as oblivious as she to the fact that ma had probably been working longer, and certainly harder, than her wholly ornamental offspring.

He saw ma—slicked and tidy, but no less drab—and more of the sticky brood, one Sunday when he was invited to supper. This event initiated him into the freemasonry of the home, and he felt that the family was openly setting the seal of approval on their "keepin' company," though as yet he had not told his love in words. Neither had he let concealment damage his young cheek. It took "cheek" to get into the good graces of the flibbertigibbet.

The supper purported to be "pot-luck," but there were two kinds of cake and three kinds of pickles, ham from the delicatessen, potato salad, and lemon-meringue pie. All the brood were obviously in their Sunday best, and those that were big enough to wash their own faces had at least managed to hit the bull's-eye of their noses.

Even pa was present—a big, silent man, who offered Jeremiah a pipe of peace—with vile tobacco—after he, too, had looked the young fellow over and decided that he would do. The truth was that the family were anxious to have their gilded lily picked from the family stem and preserved in her purity before it was too late.

The flibbertigibbet herself tossed her head and made pert witticisms at his expense. Nevertheless, Jerry had begun to wonder how long it would be before he could afford the two rooms and bath absolutely essential to the well-appointed nest.

He made several discoveries that day, some of them disappointing. She did not like kids, she had not made the pie, and she played the piano after a fashion all her own. He also learned that though she called herself Gwendolyn, her mother called her Jennie and the children Jen. Yet that night he figured for hours in his boarding-house bedroom on that ancient problem of how two can live as one.

For a while he economized so rigidly that the depleted bank began to plump up again—and then the blow fell. He lost his job.

The dapper floor-manager was responsible, for it was not only Jerry's superior strength that tinged his view with emerald, but the misdirection of the flibbertigibbet's smiles. To think that he, clothed with authority and a Markenhimer suit, should be overlooked for a country Jake!

II

THEN for Jeremiah there began again that ceaseless quest for work, the eager scanning of the want columns, the hurt of the blunt refusal, the humiliation of feeling that no man wanted him, the sickness of hope deferred. It is a tragic game for a country Jake, used to the friendly fields and the hand-clasp of neighbors. Jerry grew thin and gaunt and harried.

He was obliged to omit one of his accustomed three meals daily. He conveyed rolls and bananas and canned baked beans into the fastnesses of his third-floor cubicle, and learned to make tea in a tin cup. He thought he was very careful to remove all evidence of his downfall, for the grenadier who kept the rooming-house had forbidden any cooking in the bedrooms; but he must have underestimated her powers of observation, for once when he lifted his matutinal towel he found a plate of buttered biscuits underneath.

"Jerushy, they look good!" he exclaimed, sniffing. "Could the grenadier have meant them for me? No, she ain't that kind. She's forgotten them, but—"

There followed a battle between his palate and his conscience, and when it was over the biscuits were gone.

revealed, their brown sides bursting at the joke.

"Well, I'll be switched!" he said aloud. Then he thought he heard a laugh. It *couldn't* have been the doughnuts!

He flung himself into a bath-robe and threw open the door. He expected to find



HE COULD "HEFT" STOVES AROUND TO THE GREEN-EYED WONDER OF A SILK-SOCKED FLOOR-MANAGER; ALSO TO THE SECRET ADMIRATION OF THE FLIBBERTIGIBBET

The next night Morpheus turned fractious, and he wooed in vain. Prowling footsteps seemed to echo around his door. The night was close. The room was stuffy. Cats in the yards below fought and bled—and yowled. Tantalizing odors, ghosts of past dinners, assailed his nostrils.

His pillow was lumpier than usual, which was saying a good deal. He prodded it ineffectually, flung it viciously from him, and sank his head down upon a paper bag. Odors, like those of Araby to a hungry man, proclaimed treasure within. He grasped it greedily, and, lighting his one gas-jet, investigated further. Treasure indeed! Three crisp, fat doughnuts lay

the grenadier with her eye glued to the keyhole, but no gaunt female met his gaze. He strode to the bend in the hall—he was *sure* of that laughter—just in time to see a slender little creature with a smooth, dark head go scuttering down the back stairway.

"Now, *who* is she?" he queried.

The night was still young, but, his evening dress being a little conspicuous, he dared not follow.

After that the most wonderful things appeared in the most unexpected places—a peach turnover in his handkerchief-box, an apple in each of his best shoes, a bottle of milk in his water-pitcher, a string of sausages hung up with his neckties!

It was such an exciting game that he quite neglected the flibbertigibbet. Besides, he did not want to see her until he had a job. Once, however, he saw her walking with the obnoxious floor-manager.

He went home in a blue funk—and found the sausages. They made him laugh, and that helped some. Somebody cared—even if it was a stiff old grenadier of a woman with a mouth like a razor-edge. He had tried to speak of it when he paid his room-rent for the week, but he found no encouragement in her face. It was a face suggestive of a hardware-shop—cast-iron hair, hatchet nose, graniteware chin, and gimlet-point eyes—and who would seek sympathy in a hardware-shop?

Besides, he had discovered a very different-looking eye—just one, soft and big and brown—peering at him from between the folds of the basement curtain, and he found himself wondering about that eye. Did the other match it, and was the rest of the face in keeping? Was it old or young, and did it by any chance belong to the scuttering figure he had seen disappear down the back stairway the night the doughnuts burst their sides with laughter?

At last there came a day when he had to beg the grenadier for time to pay his room-rent. Then he discovered that if she were really the fairy godmother who had befriended him, she was very completely disguised. Because of past good behavior a stay of execution was granted for one week. After that, the deluge—and the details of the sentence were pronounced in tones that carried shrilly to the ears of the little slavey brushing down the stairs.

Of course, having reached its lowest ebb, the tide of his affairs was bound to turn. When he left the house he boldly sequestered the morning paper lying on the hall-table, temptingly folded with the "wants" outward—and before night he had found his niche. The advertisement called for a man fond of animals and understanding something of their care—and he entered the dignified shelter of the S. P. C. A. with his wide smile fixed and firm.

"I'm your man," he announced. "I know animals from cows to kittens. I can set a leg or cure the heaves, or nurse 'em through distemper. I never saw a horse I couldn't steady, or a dog that wouldn't lick my hand."

And, taking him entirely on his own recognizance, they put him to work.

The big, clean, airy rooms, many-windowed, cement-floored, with the ample stalls for the horses and the white-enameled compartments for the dogs, each to his need, large or small, each with its bed of fresh straw and porcelain drinking-pan, delighted Jeremiah. The pussies had their white wicker baskets with pink or blue baby-blankets in them, to suit varied complexions, and the birds sang or sulked behind white wire doors.

The clinic and operating-room were more of a mystery to him, but fascinating with their tanks of gas or ether, neat rows of labeled bottles, cases of bandages and splints, shining steel instruments, not of torture but of mercy, and the spotless white cleanliness that prevailed. Even the gas-chamber, which led to the portals of the happy hunting-ground, spoke of a merciful kindness.

There was just one blot on his escutcheon at the end of the week. All this happened on a Friday, and on Saturday he was obliged to exist on purloined dog-biscuits—they were not half bad—and to drink part of the kittens' milk, though he left them the lion's share. He wondered what he would find when he reached home. Strangely enough, he found nothing but a note scrawled on wrapping-paper:

She's been going through your things. Look out!

Feeling the pride of a conqueror and the self-respect that goes with a job, he presented himself boldly at the flibbertigibbet's on Sunday, in ample time to be invited to dinner. The girl's indifference melted when she heard of his good luck, and she graciously consented to make a date with him for the following Saturday half-holiday. He felt himself practically reinstated in the rôle of "steady."

And the effulgence of the flibbertigibbet! What man could look on it unmoved?

He told her tales of broken-winged pigeons, wind-broke horses, and superfluous cats.

"Have they any pretty bowwows?" she asked, waking to sudden interest. "I'd love a poodle!"

It was this that encouraged him later to try to enlist her sympathies for the mutt.

The mutt was just a pup found straying and homeless, very sad and lorn—a funny little mongrel, white save where fate hit him before and behind and left a black



WITH A TRIUMPHANT BARK HE RUSHED TO HER FEET, HIS CLUMSY LITTLE PAWS MAKING MUD-STAINS ALL OVER THOSE PRECIOUS SHOES

pinch on the tip of his tail and a patch over one eager eye—the fattest, funniest, friendliest, squirmiest, heart-hungriest pup you ever saw.

He didn't know he was just a mongrel, and he squealed like a temperamental prima donna whenever a visitor failed to notice him or petted some other dog first. Nobody wanted him. He had neither beauty nor breeding, and kind hearts have nothing over coronets when it comes to choosing a dog. Whenever any one did stretch out a hand and give him a friendly pat, he would nearly wriggle out of his wrinkled white skin with joy, and his little pink tongue would try, in the only way it knew how, to show his appreciation.

"He's just lippy—poor little cuss!" Jerry would apologize. "Oughtn't to be away from his mother."

Somehow, this little mongrel squirmed into his affections more than any of the others—perhaps because nobody wanted it.

"You're just a mutt—like me," he'd say. "S'pose nobody wants us 'cause we ain't handsome. Guess we'll have to stick together, won't we, pal?"

But in spite of all the care that Jeremiah could spare him, the little fellow cried himself half sick. Perhaps it was hope deferred with him, too; perhaps it was hurt pride. Jerry could understand just how he must feel when, in spite of all eager overtures toward friendliness, people just laughed and passed him by. His own big heart ached in sympathy.

On Saturday morning the superintendent, making his rounds, said casually: "Guess we'll have to put this little fellow out of business. Can't seem to find a place for him."

"Perhaps I can," Jerry volunteered anxiously.

The analogy between the mutt and himself was too great for him to be unmoved by the edict. At the noon hour he rushed to Goldschein's in time to meet the departing flibbertigibbet.

"I want you to come over to the shelter with me before you go home," he begged. "I've got something to show you."

"A dog?" she demanded.

"Yep."

"Oh! A fluffy, white poodle?"

"Well, it's white—but come see."

But when she saw, her disappointment was evident.

"Why, *that's* nothin' but a—a—"

"I know—a regular mutt," he admitted. "But it's *dyin'* of lonesomeness. I know what it means—to want a kind word," he pleaded.

In the end she agreed, grudgingly, to take it home to the kiddies. There were so many of them, one more little chap wouldn't matter. Jerry was so glad he almost hugged her.

"I'll get the little fellow's discharge, and we'll take him to the country with us this afternoon and let him have a run," he declared.

The flibbertigibbet, who was rather impressed by the dignity of Jerry's position, refrained from demurring.

III

Two hours later all three—the mutt, the flibbertigibbet, and the country Jake, named in their order of importance—were strolling beside a noisy little stream, somewhat swollen by the importance of its task, which was ostensibly to jump over a little cliff just here, making what was called by courtesy a waterfall, and to turn the wheel of an old mill below.

In this picturesque spot they paused and seated themselves on the grassy bank—at least the lad and his lass did. The pup raced around like a mad March hare, chasing butterflies and grasshoppers, or its own stump of a tail, worrying tin cans, rooting up twigs and bringing them as votive offerings to the goddess in the white dress. The lad would laugh and play a delightful game of tossing a big round stone for him to pursue and bring back, and every time the mutt brought it back he would pat him and say "Good-doggy!" until he fairly quivered with pleasure.

But the girl was different. She would squeal and draw her white skirts up and order him to "go 'way." He just couldn't please her, no matter what he brought. In fact, she did not like the attention he was receiving at all. That was her special prerogative. Of what use were her rose-decked hat, her scarlet parasol, and her new white shoes if not to make her irresistible in the eyes of the country Jake?

Besides, she was shrewd enough to realize that, unlike most men of her acquaintance, Jerry "meant business." In the days of his apparent defection she had been conscious of slight pricklings of jealousy when she thought some other girl might be calling forth that adoring look in his eyes. She

put forth all her charm to direct it back to herself, and she finally succeeded so well that rash Jerry almost—

It was the mutt who saved him.

He had been hunting busily for some offering worthy to lay upon the white shrine of her lap, and at last he found it. He was just a little afraid of it at first. It was



SOME-
THING
WITHIN
HIM SNAPPED.
HE REACHED THE
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THRUST HIMSELF BETWEEN THEM

unlike any animal of his acquaintance, yet it jumped about almost as briskly as himself. It was a game of "now you see me, now you don't," and the little dog grew frantic with excitement.

Did it think to escape him? Ha! He cornered it. It gazed at him with wise old eyes. It was green, it was shiny—a very jewel of an offering! And it was *alive*! Surely she would like this! He picked it up and scampered, as fast as his short little

legs would go, straight to his goal, and there he dropped it and stood back, smiling his little-dog smile and waiting to behold her joy.

"Ugh!" screamed the flibbertigibbet, jumping to her feet in horror—what unexpected creatures these humans were! "It's a nasty *frog*!"

Then she did another unexpected thing.

"You horrid little beast!" she cried, and struck him with her parasol.

He had never been really struck before, even in his forlornest days. He yelped and ran to Jerry, who looked at the girl reproachfully.

"I wouldn't hit the little fellow," he remonstrated. "He doesn't know any better."

"Well, he'd *oughter!*" Her tone was shrill. Exasperation over the passing of her opportunity sharpened it—and then to be reproved instead of petted! Temper conquered her. "I'm sick of your old cur, anyway, an' I'm not going to take it home with me, either!"

"All right," said Jerry shortly.

He turned and walked away from the flibbertigibbet with a darkening brow. She watched him mutinously.

"Homely little mutt! I hate homely things," she sneered.

Jerry did not turn, but a painful flush spread to his ears.

The girl preened her muslin feathers and strolled nonchalantly to the edge of the stream, but he did not follow. The day was not turning out as they had anticipated—all on account of that pup.

She made a last effort to regain the center of the stage. There was a large, flat stone just beyond the bank, around which the eddies whirled invitingly. She jumped nimbly across and stood there, knowing full well the picture she made in her white garb.

Had it not been that her white shoes had cost nearly a week's salary, and that they were hurting her cruelly, peace might have been restored; but again the mutt was the instrument of destruction. His was a forgiving nature, and he rushed after the flibbertigibbet to tell her so; but, being a very little puppy, he could not quite negotiate the leap, and there was much unnoticed scrabbling in the mud before he finally made it. Then with a triumphant bark he rushed to her feet, his clumsy little paws making mud-stains all over those precious shoes.

The flibbertigibbet fairly snarled with anger, and, with a really vicious kick, she sent the soft little white body whirling out into the stream.

It was Jerry's turn to rage now.

"Get out of my way!" he ordered as he brushed roughly by her and plunged into the water.

To tell the truth, he could hardly resist the impulse to fling her in after the dog.

The struggling little animal, caught in the current, was being steadily carried toward the fall.

"Oh, Jerry—*don't* risk your life for a ky-dog! Let it go!" the girl pleaded, frightened now.

But there was no great risk. It was simply a matter of plunging along fast enough, though they were very near the brink when Jerry managed to pick up the frightened little creature. He turned back, sodden and muddy, but still hot with anger—so angry that he did not dare trust himself to speak.

"The nasty cur! He spoiled my shoes," the girl defended herself. Stony silence followed. "I don't believe you'd have jumped in like that for me," she hazarded pathetically.

More silence. Then, womanlike, she tried to put the blame on him.

"The idea of thinkin' you can bring a girl like me out here to Rubetown to watch the grass grow an' a ky-dog chase itself for amusement, anyway!" she went on bitingly.

No answer to this. Jerry occupied himself by mopping off the half-drowned pup with his handkerchief.

"I'm accustomed to gentleman friends that knows how to treat a lady"—with more attempted pathos. "Shows an' suppers an' automobiles," she elucidated. "I ain't accustomed to havin' a zoo presented to me an'—bein' fed on peanuts like the rest of the animals."

This, she felt, was absolutely withering. But the dog still occupied his exclusive attention.

"These shoes cost me four bucks, an' they're spoiled," she volunteered, eying them resentfully.

Jerry put his hand in his pocket, drew out a very attenuated roll of bills, and, counting out four, offered them to her. But this was insult to injury. The flibbertigibbet had her pride.

"I don't want your money!" she cried in fury, striking it out of his hand. "And I don't want you, either! You—you cheap sport! You and your old pup can chase yourselves together!"

With these cogent words she took herself, her damaged shoes, and her dignity, out of his life forever—and he did not try to stop her.

As he watched the scarlet parasol, hung like a danger-signal over her shoulder, dis-

appearing down the path that led to the not distant car-line, he sighed.

"Never mind, partner," he soothed the shivering dog. "She's kicked me out, too, for stepping on her toes—but I guess—maybe—we're glad she did it in time!"

He picked up his rejected money and carefully replaced it with one more dollar bill—his last. Then he spread himself out to dry his clothes, and meditated on the devious ways of women until the sun went down.

IV

THAT night he smuggled the mutt into his room, and for the first time it slept happily, not missing its mother; but in the morning it cried for its breakfast, like any other baby, and he vainly tried to hush it while he dressed.

The day he received his first wages he had left a note under his pillow.

"I should have starved without you, but don't bother about me any more; I've got a job," it said—and so there were no hidden titbits to appease the mutt.

Suddenly he heard a soft little tap on his door.

"Jerushy!" he exclaimed, snatching up the dog and carefully concealing it under his bath-robe before he opened the door, just a crack.

Outside stood a little wide-eyed girl with smooth, dark hair and a smudge on one pale cheek.

"I—I thought I heard a baby," she stammered.

"You did," he said promptly, and produced it.

"Oh, the cunnin' little thing!" she exclaimed, and held out her arms for it.

"It's nothing but a little mutt," Jerry apologized.

"It's *beautiful*!" she declared, and held the puppy to her cheek, which it promptly licked.

"It's awful lippy," he apologized again. "It really needs a mother."

The girl snuggled it closer, and her eyes shone. They were wonderfully soft, brown eyes that lighted up her plain little face.

"It's hungry, I guess," she suggested sympathetically.

"Could you keep it?" Jeremiah asked doubtfully. "Maybe it's you that's been so—so good to me?"

At this her face flushed, and she dropped her eyes.

"I tell you," she evaded. "I'll take it up in my room in the attic, and nobody can hear it if it cries—least nobody ever hears me—and I guess I can manage to feed it now; but she's been watchin' me ever since—since—"

"Then you *did* feed me?"

He stepped nearer and looked down at her; but before she could reply they heard the heavy footsteps of the grenadier approaching, and the girl fled.

That afternoon he discovered the brown eye peering from behind the basement curtain, but this time he was bold.

"Bring the dog and meet me at the corner," he mouthed.

For an instant she looked frightened; then she nodded and held up ten fingers. Sure enough, in just ten minutes she was there.

"I have to be back at five o'clock to get her tea," she said. "I hope she didn't see me!"

"What would she do?"

"Send me back to the orphan asylum, I s'pose."

"Are you an orphan?"

"I'm—just nobody. Leastways I don't know who I am. I was brought up at the asylum."

"I see!" said Jerry gravely. "But you might be a princess in disguise. What's your name?"

"Annie. That author fellow in the front room calls me 'Little Orphant Annie'—but maybe I'm not. Maybe some day I'll find somebody that *belongs* to me—somebody that 'd kinder care about me." There was no guile in the wistful gaze—so different from the flibbertigibbet's. Jerry felt his throat tighten.

"Never mind," he comforted. "We're all in the same boat—you and me and the mutt—I guess."

"You, too?"

"Yep."

"Huh!" She laughed happily, like a youngster. "We're all sort of mutts, then, aren't we?"

"Guess we are," he grinned.

V

IN the week following there were several stolen marches and many hairbreadth escapes. The grenadier became a she dragon to their youthful imaginations, the pup and the slavey the sacrifices she sought, the country Jake a modern Cœur de Lion.

At first Jerry took the dog back to the Shelter by day and returned it to Annie's tender care at night, but it was not always easy to pass it along. The eye of the dragon was too often upon them; so finally, growing bolder, they gave this up, and she kept it hidden in her room. At night she would usually manage to slip to Jerry's door, and he would smuggle their wriggly pet out for a constitutional, to find her watching for his return. It seemed to draw them very close together, this joint care of a helpless little creature. It was surprising to find how little he missed the flibbertigibbet.

But the inevitable happened at last!

Jerry, coming in one night a little later than usual, heard the penetrating voice of the grenadier—as, indeed, no one with ears could help doing—raised in shrill denunciation.

"So that's what you're up to—you little, lying, sneaking hussy! I caught you this time—stealing the food right off my table to feed that dirty puppy!" she shrieked. "How dare you? And me slaving to make ends meet!"

A little frightened wail of protest reached Jerry and made him hasten his steps.

"You ungrateful girl! I don't care whose it is. Either that dog is gone by morning, or it's out of my house you'll git, bag and baggage, do you hear?"

Jerry, half-way up the flight, saw her grasp the girl's thin little shoulders and shake her savagely, while the mutt barked with all his baby might at their feet. Something within him snapped. He reached the top in three leaps and thrust himself between them.

"That's my dog!" he choked out, picking up their valiant little defender—and he really thought, for the minute, that all this surge of feeling was for the pup.

"Well, you can git, too, then! Unless you get rid of that dog right away, the hull three of you can go!" And with this ultimatum the landlady clumped angrily down the stairs.

Annie covered her face with her apron and wept silently.

"Why, Annie!" he whispered. "What happened?"

"She—she found out," she sobbed, "about the food, and—she saw your note, too—and now, the mutt. But, honest to goodness, Mr. Jerry, I didn't steal. I never took more than my share. I—I just di-

vided it with you—with you and the mutt. You see, you were both *hungry*, and I wasn't—not very—"

"Why, you poor little child!" Jerry put his arm around her and drew her down on the top step beside him. His voice was husky. "I'll take the mutt away—right off."

"Oh, no—no—*please!* I can go back, but I wouldn't put the little mutt out—not if she beats me!"

She leaned against him like a child, and she seemed almost as little and soft as the mutt. His arm tightened around her. He looked at her with new vision. The sweet, brave, loyal woman heart! What was beauty, what was birth, what was *anything*, beside a spirit like hers? Something choked him, so that for a moment he could not speak.

"I love this pup," she cried passionately. "It's all I've got to love!"

"Annie—little Annie!" He tipped her face up reverently. "What's the matter with me? Don't you—couldn't you include me?"

And he knew then that fate had shown him the flibbertigibbet just to teach him to tell the true from the false.

"Oh—yes!" she barely breathed.

"Then listen." Both arms were round her now. "To-morrow they are going to send me back to the country—the society, I mean—to take charge of the farm for convalescent horses. Isn't that great? And there's a house, and chickens, and cows, and flowers—and all it needs is a little girl like you to make it heaven. They told me I would need a wife."

"Oh, Jerry—*me?*"

"Will you?"

"But I'm just—"

His kiss stopped her.

"You're the dearest thing I ever saw!" he cried ecstatically.

For a moment they searched each other's eyes.

"Go get your hat, you dear little white-faced kiddy," Jerry commanded. "We are going to be married *right now*, and pack up afterward. Bring the pup. We're all mutts together, and we're going to stick tight!"

As they left the house, after breaking the news, Jeremiah saw an eye at the basement window. It was like a gimlet-point, but—would you believe it?—there was a tear-drop in it!

Beau Revel*

A SCINTILLANT NOVEL OF MANHATTAN'S MAD GAIETY

By Louis Joseph Vance

Author of "The Lone Wolf," "Joan Thursday," "The Black Bag," etc.

LARRY REVEL, known as Beau Revel because of his popularity with women, has a grown-up son, Dick, whose mother divorced Larry years before. Alice Lathom knows that Revel is a dangerous man—knows, too, that her husband is insanely jealous of her—yet she not only allows Revel to make love to her, but even half promises to get a divorce and marry him.

At a fashionable dance and supper club Larry finds his son, Dick, making love to Nelly Steele, a former vaudeville artist whose dancing has made the place popular. Mrs. Benzoni, a member of his set, informs him that Nelly is as virtuous as she is beautiful; that a quondam vaudeville partner named Phyfe worships her; that she is backed in her club venture by a Mrs. Wade, whose son, Rossiter Wade, 2nd, is in love with her though he already possesses a wife.

Revel meets and cultivates Nelly Steele in order to learn for himself what sort of a girl has won his son's love, and finds her charming, but frankly mercenary. She tells him that she does not wish to marry any one, and when she does, money will be the major consideration. Larry tries to convince his son that Nelly is not the sort of girl he should marry, and to emphasize his argument he telephones her then and there and makes a dinner appointment with her. Larry obtains Dick's promise to keep away from Nelly for two weeks. Their discussion grows into a heated argument, during which Dick valiantly defends Nelly. Finally, to prove the dancer's worthlessness, Larry makes a wager with his son that two weeks from that night he will have Nelly Steele alone with him in his apartment at midnight.

Larry rather tactlessly tells Alice Lathom of the efforts he is making in his son's behalf, and learns that Alice resents his attention to the dancer. He takes Nelly to dinner, and, rather to his own surprise, finds he is developing quite a personal interest in her. They have a long and confidential chat regarding Nelly's worthless brother, and Larry promises to do something for the boy.

Dick Revel, true to his promise to keep away from Nelly Steele for two weeks, is tortured by his self-enforced absence. He goes to Alice Lathom with his troubles, and his description of his father's attention to Nelly does nothing to quiet that lady's growing suspicion that Larry does not really care for her. That evening her husband, whom she knows to be untrue, comes home unexpectedly and babbles drunken words of endearment which disgust her.

Revel invites Nelly Steele to lunch with him down-town, and the next chapter opens with her visit to his law-office in one of the tall buildings of lower Broadway.

IX

REVEL stood beside his desk, watching Nelly Steele. His countenance was composed, even thoughtful, but in the depths of his eyes lurked an odd smile, which was provoked by his perception of the piquant incongruity of the sober frame his office furnished for that consummately feminine figure, instinct with gentle grace in every contour and movement indicated by the suave, cool lines of her gray velvet gown.

Round her shoulders and over her bosom hung a chain of amethysts quaintly set, the work of cunning Chinese silversmiths, its tasseled ends of silver fringe swaying gently as she moved about with neither haste

nor rest, with the lively inquisitiveness of a child confident in strange surroundings.

She touched the plate of heavy glass that protected the dark mahogany of his desk, and examined with quick, understanding glances the mahogany letter-trays, the neat docketts of papers, the desk-fittings of heavy antique brass, the excellently chosen rug, the luxurious, deep chairs of leather upholstery, the several good canvases on the sage-toned walls. She ended wonder-struck at a window overlooking the lower island with its gigantesque groupings of office blocks and, beyond, the far-flung sweep of the harbor, its blue plaque furrowed here and there by shuttling keels and blotted with plumes of steam immaculately white in the wintry air.

* Copyright, 1919, by Louis Joseph Vance—This story began in the June number of MURSEY'S MAGAZINE

Aware of his silent but constant regard, she looked round with eyes of friendly confidence. Revel reminded himself that this was Friday. A week ago last midnight he had first learned of the existence of a woman named Nelly Steele; to-day she had journeyed down-town to lunch with him and make herself acquainted with his offices.

"I was thinking how funny it is that I, born in New York, should never before have visited the Wall Street district. I suppose this is the Wall Street district?"

He went to her side and indicated, far below, a green plot of grass and a fore-shortened brown spire.

"Anything in the neighborhood of Trinity is Wall Street."

"And the first time, too, I've been in a real office—I mean, except a manager's or an agent's or a theatrical lawyer's."

"Curiously enough, now that you make me think of it, this is the first time any woman has ever been in this office—not counting my secretary—and, I presume, the charwoman who comes in after hours."

That this happened to be true failed to detract from his pleasure in communicating information of such personal interest. He was rewarded by a flash of light incredulity.

"And you have known so many attractive women!"

"But never before one who so interested me that I wanted her to know the circumstances of my business life."

The candid blue-gray eyes held his for a moment, then looked away. Nelly smiled faintly and sighed a little sigh of humility only half affected.

"Whether you're making fun of me or not, I like it." She left the window and moved toward a chair on which rested her furs. "I've enjoyed every minute."

Revel offered no objection, but took up a soft gray-squirrel cape and deftly settled it upon her shoulders. The touch of his hands conveyed a nicely calculated hint of reluctance to withdraw; nevertheless, they did not linger.

"Till to-morrow, then—"

"Yes." She began to pull on her gloves. "What time?"

"Noon, sharp. We'll lunch at Claremont, motor out through Tuxedo to Interstate Park and Bear Mountain, down the west shore to Nyack, recross the Hudson there, and reach Forester's Inn just in time for dinner."

"It sounds delightful!" She took her muff from him. "And thank you so much!"

"For what? Letting you create an oasis of beauty in the drab aridity of a business day?"

She laughed lightly, and turned toward the door. Revel forestalled her there, and halted with a hand on the knob.

"Nelly—" It was the first time he had used her given name alone; but she seemed not to notice it. "To-morrow's a long way off."

"But surely you'll come to the club to-night?"

He offered a wry face of distaste.

"With a hundred people about? Couldn't we have dinner, a wee bit of a quiet dinner, by ourselves this evening?"

"But I'm dining at the hotel with mother and Will Phyfe."

"You can't get out of it?"

She compressed her lips in a forbidding expression belied by mirthful eyes.

"Well, I'll see—"

"You mean, you really think you can?"

"I'll give you a ring before five and let you know."

He went with her to the street, where his car, which had brought her down-town, was waiting to take her home again. On his return the office seemed strangely bare.

He sat at his desk, found a paper of importance requiring immediate attention, and endeavored to give his mind to it; but his thoughts were quick with visual memories of her unstudied witchery as she lingered by the desk, at the window, beside the chair when he held her wrap, in a dozen other poses.

He put aside the paper and lighted a cigar, troubled. Was he losing his grip? Was Beau Revel to be beaten at his own game by a pretty dancing-girl in no essential different from any other of her kind?

That wasn't true. He must be fair. Essentially Nelly was different. He recounted a dozen qualities, conspicuously her simplicity, her honesty, her quick intelligence, her whimsical turn of humor, her unpretending but shrewd self-valuation, that combined to distinguish her from all other women.

Nevertheless, she must be to him no better, no worse, no more worth serious consideration than any other. One woman more or less in his life was merely one woman more or less.

But such reflections led him a way he had

no wish to go, lest conscience prick the bubble of that self-esteem without which he was nothing but a weary man of middle age, unillusioned, aimless, wanting *raison d'être*.

He was successful, finally, in concentrating upon his work; yet each time the telephone rang he turned to the instrument with a thrill of quickened pulses. Late in the afternoon he took up the receiver to hear a woman's voice, but not Nelly's. In conflict of surprise and disappointment, dismay and chagrin, he found himself stammering witlessly:

"Why—why, Alice—is it you?"

"Yes, Larry."

Those unapproachably sweet accents were charged with a feeling he was afraid to analyze.

"At last!" He effected a partial recovery. "I've been wondering—"

"I tried to get you yesterday."

"Rudge told me. When you didn't call up again, I thought perhaps you had some reason for not doing so."

"I had. Frank came home unexpectedly." Her tone conveyed all he needed to know. "I'd like to see you, Larry, if it can be arranged. Frank's staying in bed today, but I told him I was dining out."

"If I'd only known in time!"

"Then you're engaged?"

"Yes, but I'll try to get out of it. I must see you—of course. You've kept me on tenter-hooks all week." An injudicious opening if Alice knew too much! He hurried on, giving her no chance: "Where can I call you, say about five?"

"At home. But if it's inconvenient—tomorrow will do as well."

"Unfortunately to-morrow's impossible. I've got to run over to Philadelphia for a client. Awful nuisance!"

In the act of lying, he wondered why. A simple excuse would have served as well, even better. The one woman he had never lied to, to whom he had sworn never to lie!

"To-night, then, if you can manage it, Larry."

"If I don't telephone by five, it'll mean I can't."

"I understand," Alice replied, and her voice sounded weary and sad. She said abruptly: "Good-by."

"Wait, Alice! I want—"

She had hung up.

He began a worried pacing to and fro, seeing himself pitilessly revealed in the

guise of liar and craven in one, the poorest creature he had ever known.

He determined, when Nelly called up, he would put her off, he would fake some excuse; whether or not she saw through it didn't matter. He must play fair with Alice; self-respect was at stake.

But Nelly thought it injudicious to break her engagement with mother and Will Phyfe. Mother, she suggested, was a trifle difficult. Revel grasped the implication. Nelly had let herself in for domestic criticism by giving so much time to him. And no wonder! He made duly sympathetic noises.

The hand that subsequently moved toward the telephone faltered. He really needed time to think before meeting Alice. The week had gone so rapidly, had been so full of Nelly, he hadn't had much time to himself. Better wait till Sunday. He had a presentiment that after to-morrow things would shake down into more comprehensible and negotiable shape. Besides, he could hardly face Alice with that idiotic lie on his conscience. Once its occasion had been safely consigned to the limbo of his private history, it wouldn't matter; he would forget it as soon as he felt sure it couldn't be raked up and exposed to his discredit.

Avoiding his clubs, he elected to dine alone, morosely, in the café-lounge of the Plaza, *tête-à-tête* with a newspaper. Frightfully lonesome and irking! Why had he been such a fool about Alice? The only way to deal with nettles was to grasp them with a firm hand. No matter if it proved a bit trying, a quiet dinner with Alice would at least have advanced matters toward some sort of solution. And he wouldn't have been lonesome.

He thought of Dick, whom he missed horribly. Looking up, he saw the boy glowering at him in the entrance from the lobby; but immediately Dick swung on a heel and marched out.

A spasm of pain rent Revel's bosom. He conceived himself sinned against by wilful misunderstanding. By what right did this son of his question the disinterested sincerity of his motives? Here he was, risking not only the tongue of scandal, but the one *grande passion* of his life, to rescue Dick from the toils of an infatuation which might have resulted ruinously—and his reward, to be cut by one whom he loved better than his own life! He propped up the

newspaper for a shield between his agonized self and the eyes of an unfeeling world, and conned studiously news which, passing through eyes to brain, was eliminated without registering a trace.

Persistently his resentment of Dick's unreasonable attitude, of the unsatisfactory status of his relations with Alice, of his own infirmity of purpose, and of his present desolation of spirit in having nobody to talk to, was confounded with resentment of the thought that Nelly was wasting the evening on that animal.

Having met him at the Club de Danse, Revel had any amount of justifiable excuse for disliking Phyfe intensely. He was not only an actor, he was too young—not over thirty, at most—too good-looking and tastefully dressed, too well poised and mannered, in short, too damnably unobjectionable altogether. If Nelly hadn't been able to hit it off with him in vaudeville, why the deuce was he sticking round her now, with all the assurance of a friend of the family, taking up her time to the detriment of her interests?

He tried to recall what Queenie Benzoni had said about Phyfe; but, beyond a hazy impression of something acid in Queenie's tone, memory was at fault.

To kill an otherwise hopeless evening he wandered over to Broadway and into the first theater he came to. Chance gave him an aisle seat in the middle of the orchestra. During the first *entr'acte* he found himself the object of signals from a stage box occupied by the Benzonis, with Drummond Hale, a Mrs. Artemas whom he knew slightly, and—Revel looked again before crediting his eyes—Nora Nettleton. An ill-balanced party!

He had a mental frown, then an appreciative chuckle; and going round to the box, he accepted with malicious alacrity Queenie's invitation to join them later in the Crystal Room. The evening began to seem more promising. Benzoni was openly ill at ease and the Nettleton girl uncommonly quiet, almost sulky beneath surface calm.

When chance arranged to leave them alone at table while the others danced, Queenie confirmed his diagnosis.

"I'm cultivating an unholy passion for dear Nora. Benzoni doesn't know what to make of it. The girl's wise, but too much a kid to handle the situation. I keep them together all the time, never give them a mo-

ment alone. Benzoni's already beginning to pick flaws in her; he resents hideously that she can't seem to hold her own with me, and magnifies enormously little slips due to natural embarrassment. She's furious with him for letting her in for such punishment. Two days more, and I'll have them so heartily sick of the whole thing that they'll never forgive each other for starting this foolishness. Am I a great woman, Larry, or am I not?"

"You are a great woman, Queenie. I only wish your brain was in charge of my affairs!"

"If it was, you wouldn't have so many." She met his stare with purposeful nod. "There's one, at least, I'd crab if I knew how."

He rolled prayerful eyes heavenward and groaned: "Oh, Lord!"

"Yes—me, too. You needn't think you can get away with anything gaudy in this tight little town without people talking. And you needn't put on that look of injured innocence; you've got nothing of the sort in your make-up."

"I presume," Revel said with elaborate lassitude, "you've been overeating again—on your favorite dish, gossip—and are now suffering with an acute attack of moral indigestion."

"I don't know anything about morals. They cramp my style. I'm a simple-minded soul, primitive and everything; all I know is fair play. I'm talking about Nelly Steele. Everybody else is, thanks to you. Oh, it takes you, Larry, to turn a woman's head and rush her so furiously that, inside a week, the whole town sits up and takes notice!"

"Aren't you exaggerating?"

"Don't be a hypocrite!"

"I mean, about Nelly's head being so easily turned."

"I didn't say anything about easily; it took you to do it. And I think it's perfectly poisonous of you!"

"But if Nelly finds me amusing—"

"You know she finds you more than that."

"I'm sure you're mistaken. But assuming she does—is that anybody's business but hers and mine?"

"Look here, Larry! If I could be snubbed, I wouldn't be infesting the Ritz to-night; I'd be helping elevate the drahmah to the level of the New Amsterdam Roof on the strength of my still, small voice and

noble underpinning. Besides, I'm too fond of Nelly to let a little thing like a snub hinder me from fighting her battles for her."

"And most public-spirited of you, too!"

Their glances clashed. Perceiving the glint of mulish resentment in his eyes, the woman gave way craftily. Her look softened; she let her hand rest a moment, affectionately, on his arm.

"Don't let's row, Larry. I'm just as fond of you as I am of Nelly, every bit. I don't want either of you made unhappy. You're such a dear—and Nelly's much too nice for you, much too nice to have life spoiled for her solely to prove you can do it once more."

Revel forced a half smile of fatigued derision.

"So that's what you think!"

"Oh, I know well enough you tell yourself you're doing this to save Dick from marrying an actress; but, Larry"—Queenie shook her head at him sadly—"you never yet played any game to lose."

"I'm not thinking of losing!"

"Don't I know? But if you win this time you're going to break Nelly's heart." He made a slight sign of impatience. "Oh, not the way you mean, perhaps. I still believe the girl's much too sensible to let it go as far as that. But if you rob her of her chance, just now when she's making good, getting where she's always wanted to be—and you will, you know, if you go on. People aren't going to have any use for one of your discards, apparent or real. She'll be done for socially when you drop her. And if you let it go that far, Larry, I've got a hunch, and I hope to God I'm right, you'll pay, too, for once—pay in blood and tears!"

"Not wishing me any hard luck, eh, Queenie?" Revel laughed quietly. "They're coming back," he added as the floor began to be cleared of dancers at the close of a number. "Mind if I duck, old dear? I'm about fed up for to-night."

He tried to keep his manner light, and measurably succeeded; but resentment was hardening his heart; it glinted frostily in his eyes and tightened grimly his lips as he shouldered through the revolving door to the Forty-Fifth Street sidewalk, nodded curt refusal to a porter who ached to call him a taxi, and turned east to Madison to walk home.

Things were getting a bit too thick for passive toleration, he told himself. Oppo-

sition was a dangerous thing to offer Larry Revel at any time. The temptation to override it, as a rule, was stronger than any counsels of discretion. Queenie's impertinence—in his anger he chose to christen it that—and the implied threat that people might lose patience with him at last and refuse to overlook yet another glaring escapade, with Dick's irrational hostility and the importunate claims Alice had upon his increasingly reluctant consideration—all this bade fair to prove too much for him, without any more incentive to have his own way heedless of cost.

The day was not yet done with him.

Absorbed in embittered reverie, he approached the Gramercy Square apartment-house in which he lodged. A man in evening dress opened the door before he could use his key, and, stepping out, glanced sharply at him, then paused. His voice was crisp:

"Mr. Revel?"

Startled out of his preoccupation, Larry identified the man Phyfe, and instinctively squared himself on the defensive.

"Good evening, Mr. Phyfe."

"Your valet didn't know when you'd be home. I'm in luck!"

"What can I do for you?"

"If you'll be good enough to give me two minutes of your time—"

"Shall we go up to my rooms?"

"Thanks, no. What I have to say can be said here, without putting you to any more inconvenience." Taller by more than half a head, the man looked down into Revel's face, cool, collected, calculative, with even a flavor of sardonic condescension. "You may not relish what I'm about to say—"

"Then permit me to advise you not to say it."

"Sorry—I'm not altogether a free agent; in part, I speak for another. Mrs. Steele's much distressed on account of Nelly's interest in you—and yours in her."

"Well?"

"And I, on my part, have been in love with Nelly for years. I know I've got no chance; I know I'm only an actor; she's far too good and fine for me. But so is she for your sort." A quietly lifted hand checked Revel's hot impulse to interrupt. "I fancy you can guess what I want to say now, but— It's this—I'm going to take it upon myself to hold you personally respon-

sible for Nelly's happiness. I haven't a shadow of right—but I'm going to. I hope you'll remember; if you do, it'll spare both of us—and others—a lot of unpleasantness. That's all. It's no good your telling me to go to hell, although I don't deny that you are justified in doing so. Good evening, Mr. Revel."

He turned away. In a lowering stare, Revel watched his tall figure swinging deliberately down the deserted sidewalk. He found himself singularly satisfied with his refusal to give that insolence the recognition of an answer. And with this feeling he was conscious of another, no less curious—a quieting sense of settled purpose where, five minutes ago, there had been turmoil of conflicting impulses.

He made a strange gesture of defiance and at the same time of resignation.

X

PURSUING tirelessly its fanlike white flare of headlights, the motor-car slipped smoothly through the ebbing dusk, traversing empty and winding country roads. Of the splendor of sunset in the southwestern skies only a lake of emerald light lingered, fast draining into night. An appreciable touch of chill was added to the crisp November air.

Nelly Steele stirred out of a long lapse in dreaming languor and drew her furs more closely about her. Revel sat forward and offered to put up the window in the door. Her head made a sign of negation.

"I like the air—if it isn't too cold for you."

He touched the switch controlling the interior lights, looked at the clock, shut off the illumination, and settled back into his corner.

"Quarter to six. We'll make Forester's in fifteen minutes. Can't imagine what's got into this old bus. First time in its history it ever made a run on schedule. It must know it's carrying you."

A smile was more surmised than seen in the face softly silhouetted against the window.

"No; it's a way you have. I've noticed." Her laugh was conscious. "Heavens! I've had opportunity enough in six days! There's always a finish in the way you do things. Nothing is ever forgotten—and you think of things nobody else ever seems to. It's unusual, and it's nice."

"I'm very happy, since you're pleased."

Nelly settled her chin more cozily in its collar of fur. Revel relapsed into silent contemplation, savoring intensely the sense of intimacy imparted by their common segregation in the darkness of that small compartment whose boxlike walls of glass, steel, and upholstery, together with its un-resting onward sweep, provided such complete insulation from all the rest of life, with its claims, its cares, its distractions, its annoyances. Here, for a time at least, nothing could touch them, no disturbing influences could affect them; they were deliciously alone with their awareness of each other.

Without intention, Revel sighed. The girl looked an inquiry.

"I was thinking—wondering what lovers did for solitude before the days of motor-cars. Then I remembered, and it made me a little sad to think I was old enough to remember what they did."

"So I was wrong," she replied with a twinkle of mischief. "Our thoughts were not the same."

"And yours?"

"I'm afraid as commonplace as you might expect. I was thinking what everybody thinks so often—what a pity all pleasant things must end."

"I can't agree. It's our knowledge that everything must end that lends such keen relish to our pleasures. Otherwise they'd bore us to tears. Think how tragic life would be without the hope of death. And love—"

"Take care!" she laughed. "Leave me my illusions yet a little while. I've got blind faith in love. I'm sure, if one gave it a chance, it could make all things delightful last forever."

"Forever?" he mused. "A long word—in a short life."

"Not to you, surely! I don't understand how life can be short to you, when I see you constantly worrying to invent new ways to waste it."

"Then you think one's life ought to be useful?"

"I think every life ought to be happy. All happy lives are useful, no matter what else they may be."

"You'd make a poor doctor, Nelly; your prescription calls for an ingredient most people can't find a pinch of between the cradle and the grave."

"That's because they don't know it when they see it. Happiness is everywhere

for those who have the wit and the will to see it."

"Youth thinks so. Middle age knows happiness is scarce and hard to come by."

"Do you want it for nothing?" She had him now! "What value would you put on it if you didn't have to search and work for it? And do you want it to be everlasting and—bore you to tears?"

"You win. But—h-m!" That modified grunt signified thoughtfulness more than mirth. "Yes, you're right. You make me ashamed of myself. I go through life grousing, but all the while the happiest things keep happening to me. I'm absurdly happy now, for instance, to have you by my side, to think you've enjoyed the afternoon with me, that you like to be with me. I may think that, mayn't I—Nelly?"

"Yes," she admitted; "you've taught me to like to be with you—I'm afraid, too much."

"How can that be—too much?"

"We both know it can't go on."

"And—please!—why not?"

"We'll only end by making others unhappy. We're doing that to some extent even now. You know, you've rather carried me off my feet; you haven't given me much time to think about anything but what fun it is to be with you and share your pleasure in the things you find—and make—amusing. But there are others who must be considered. I've been reminded."

"So have I." No time fitter to his purpose than this, with Nelly in her present mood of wistful mutiny. He went on in a quiet drawl of amusement: "I don't imagine you know your mother sent the amiable Mr. Phyfe to interview me last night."

"Will Phyfe!" She started sharply and sat upright. "What about?"

"My intentions. It seems they're distrusted. Mr. Phyfe informed me that he had assumed responsibility for the conservation of your happiness, and that I would disturb it—Heaven knows how!—only at peril, so I gathered, of personal violence at his hands."

"Oh! How dared he?"

"I understood he was acting under instructions from your mother."

Aquiver with indignation, she cried impulsively:

"They had no right! I'm so sorry, Mr. Revell!"

"Forgive me for telling you. I thought you ought to know."

"Yes," she agreed tensely—"I should think so!"

Slowly the car swung off the highway. In the gloom the ranks of party-colored lamps on the façade of Forester's Inn winked through a multitude of leafless branches. With a wide sweep, the driveway brought them to the entrance. Alighting, Revel was cheered to remark an unusually large number of motor-cars in the parking space. In the warm weather that would have been nothing out of the ordinary, but at this season one was apt to find Forester's slenderly patronized, and to feel uncomfortably conspicuous in its vast dining-room. Saturday, however, was always a busy day for Post Road restaurants, regardless of the calendar.

Saturday! Revel treated himself to a cynic smile in secret as he waited for the girl to efface the dust of motoring. The first week would not be up till midnight tomorrow. With eight days to go, he had less than half—oh, far less than half!—the distance left to cover. In fairness, he owed Mr. Phyfe something handsome for showing him such a time-saving short cut.

Lounging in the entrance-hall, he reviewed the comfortably thronged restaurant without seeing a face he knew except those of the waiters; and waiters, as every one knows, don't count. Ignored repositories of thousands of indiscreet confidences, sharing with physicians and lawyers the sacred office of confessors to society in general, but without their recognition and emoluments, for some reason the world persists in counting waiters negligible. Perhaps it is because, obedient to some unwritten code, they so seldom tell.

Casually Revel reminded himself that, for the first time in a year, he was visiting Forester's in the company of any woman but Alice Lathom. Not that it mattered. But it had been a favorite resort with them. He remembered that it was the first place at which they had ever stopped for tea, on the first of their little stolen excursions. At that very table over there in the far corner, where he was to sit with Nelly Steele tonight, he had persuaded Alice of his passion, had won her first look of dawning tenderness.

He shrugged in light derision of the sentimentality that raked up a souvenir so faded and trivial. As if a road-house could be sacred to his love for Alice; as if he had not for twenty years, off and on, used For-

ester's to entertain so many flames and lesser lights-o'-love that memory flinched from the task of recalling them! As well insist that one be sentimental about Fifth Avenue because one has traversed it with a sweetheart in a bus!

Sentiment, he reflected, especially sentiment about places and things, meant nothing, anyway. Women, he had noticed, were as a rule immune to its enervating influence. Men were the only true sentimentalists. Men believed in sentiment, cherished it as something ennobling, openly boasted of it, or in secret were proud of it. Women, never—or hardly ever. Having invented it, they knew its workings too well to respect it or credit it with any human virtues. They used it and discarded it according to their needs of the moment. The practical sex, woman—so Meredith wrote.

He didn't believe Forester's Inn meant much to Alice. He inclined to question whether she would remember they had first stopped there for tea.

Admonished by conscience that he was cultivating an attitude toward Alice neither just nor magnanimous, he gave an idle moment to examination into his secret motive. Was it possible he was already so sated with conquest that the mere promise of it was enough to quench his ardor? He winced; that explanation meant an end to all dreams of romance. Or was it merely a subconscious impulse springing from his dread of marriage? Or was there another reason, the true reason, one he preferred not to name as yet?

It was odd—annoying, too—the way scruples about his treatment of Alice lurked uneasily but persistently in the back of his mood all through a dinner otherwise the most interesting he had enjoyed in many a day. Never had Forester's kitchen responded more nobly to his exacting demands. Nelly was more than ever charming. Her reaction from his account of Phyfe's officiousness exceeded Revel's confident hopes, bringing out a coquetry finished, adroit, yet apparently spontaneous, that put him on his mettle.

He had no reason to believe she found his response inadequate, or that it proved less effective than its provocation. But through it all self-reproach concerning Alice persevered like a haunting perfume which, with its deathless pressure upon senses and emotions, recalls wan ghosts of dear things dead. And so sensitive to it was

he that when they got up to go, involuntarily, against his will, indeed, he scanned furtively the faces at each table, fearing to find Alice somewhere there.

Entering the cloak-room to get his ulster and hat, he saw, leaving it by the door to the service bar, a man whose carriage reminded him of Frank Lathom, the more so because of a notable unsteadiness of gait. But he disappeared too quickly, and Revel was not at all anxious to have his impression confirmed. If Alice were really anywhere about, he didn't want to know it. But it was like Lathom to sneak into the service bar for a drink he didn't need and had in all likelihood promised not to take. Unhappy Alice!

Nelly never kept him waiting long. Such consideration was one of her most captivating traits. Nevertheless, it was a relief to get away.

"Eight o'clock," he told the girl as he settled into place beside her, "and an easy hour's run to your hotel. That ought to give you plenty of time to dress and rest and get to the club."

"The most thoughtful man I know!" she replied. "An hour to dress, with half an hour's rest, will set me up famously for dancing. Now anybody else—as a rule, I have to fight, almost, to get away with any time at all to spare."

"I want you never to regret any time you may care to give me."

"You have a way of making sure of that."

He was quiet for a moment; then in a tone half humorous, half plaintive, he asked:

"And when may I hope to see you again?"

She replied quite frankly:

"Whenever you wish."

"You don't mean to let Mr. Phyfe and—other people—interfere?"

"Hardly!"

"You make me very happy, Nelly."

"I'm glad. But there—you know—the danger lies."

"You think it dangerous for us to see so much of each other?"

"You know it is."

"Perhaps—but Nelly—it's very sweet."

She said nothing. He hung in seeming diffidence for a moment, then put out a hand to one of hers that rested outside the robe. She offered no resistance as he lifted it a little and bent his lips to it.

"My dear—" breathed Beau Revel.

He heard a shout of rage and warning. With a startled cry Nelly took her hand away. In the same breath many things happened. The car swerved dangerously to the right, shook with the impact of a crashing collision, skidded and lurched sickeningly, throwing Nelly bodily into Revel's arms, and, righting, came to a dead stop.

Half dazed, Revel found himself in the road, at the chauffeur's elbow, and heard his profane complaints.

"That damned fool cut right in front of me, coming up from behind, with all the rest of the road clear—not another car in sight!"

Recalling himself with an effort, Revel discovered, a little way off to the left, a roadster on its side.

A man, picking himself up out of the shadow of the overturned car, hailed them in blurred accents:

"Lend hand, will y'? There'sh lady here—m' wife—"

Revel shuddered. It was the voice of Frank Lathom!

XI

THE memory of the hour that followed was to abide with Revel all his days, and never to be recalled without a sense, like a mental blush, of stinging shame.

Alice had suffered a nervous shock and a severe shaking up, but nothing more serious. Once helped to her feet, she walked unassisted to Revel's car, and quietly took her place with Nelly in the rear seat. Lathom had sprained a wrist. His roadster was completely out of commission. Revel's had no injury to show but a fender bent and cracked. To ask the Lathoms to let him take them home was unavoidable; their acceptance was inevitable. Unquestionably, left to herself, Alice would have refused, but since refusal must involve an impossible explanation to her husband, she accepted the awkward situation with dignity.

The after-effects of her accident amply excused her silence, but Revel knew too well it would not have been maintained with such persistence but for the discovery of his atrocious perfidy. The consciousness of his witless lie exposed lay like a naked sword between them all through that homeward ride—a sword which neither charity nor repentance could ever sheathe,

which time would never dull or render weak with rust. Against this woman's love and faith he had committed the unpardonable sin. He had at least the wit to appreciate that any attempt to sue for pardon would only serve to render his offense more heinous.

If there had been a ghost of hope for Revel, Lathom would have dispelled it with his irrepressible babblings. Excitement, anger, and the pain in his wrist, added to drunkenness, did away altogether with whatever mental balance the man may have had before the accident. Incessantly he talked, raved, explained, argued, ranted, threatened, lamented, and found fault. By turns, he fawned on Revel, promised to sue him for damages, and reviled him for employing an incompetent chauffeur—upon whom, of course, Lathom laid all the blame for the collision when he did not assign it to a broken steering-knuckle, to attempted interference with his driving on the part of Alice, to anything and everything, in short, except the true cause.

At other times he narrated a history of the evening, with all incidents leading up to its great event elaborately and tediously detailed. What Alice had said to him on this or that occasion was recited time and time again—with his scintillating retorts. His wide, violent, and unmeaning gesticulations filled the car; his breath polluted its air.

The pallid oval of Alice's face, as she rested quietly in her corner, was a flower of reproach in the sight of Revel. He tried in vain to avoid looking her way, to forget. He chafed in utterest exasperation, hopeless of relief. It was all sickening and hideous, and there was no helping matters.

Piecing together fragments of Lathom's semicoherent ravings, he perceived that there had been scant element of coincidence in the contretemps. His lie had set the stage; the love Alice entertained for him precipitated the dénouement. It appeared that Lathom, probably seeking to appease his wife and effect a show of reconciliation, had suggested motoring out into the country—"for the sake of his nerves." He had, so he averred, been overworked of late; his nerves were not all they ought to be.

With reluctance, Heaven could witness how pardonable, Alice had assented. Revel surmised a pledge that he wouldn't drink exacted from Lathom, violated secretly on the first opportunity, thereafter openly dis-

regarded. It was Alice who had suggested stopping at Forester's Inn—and despite his contention that women were exempt from the promptings of sentiment, Revel knew why; but Lathom didn't, though for some obscure reason he resented her choice and laid heavy emphasis on it by repeated and laborious essays in sarcasm.

Once Alice had got her way, he related, she hadn't been satisfied. You never could depend on a woman. Do everything in the world to please her, and she wouldn't be satisfied. No sooner seated at the table than she wanted to get up and go. What for? Heaven only knew. No reason at all, if you asked Lathom. Ask Alice; she'd tell you the same. "Jush feminine inconshishnshy." All woman were like that. Leave it to Revel if it wasn't so. No matter where you looked you'd never find a sex more inconshish — contrarier than woman. Look at Alice—said she was hungry and wouldn't eat when a perf'ly good dinner was set before her. Lathom had discovered Revel and Nelly on entering and had wanted to hail them and make it a foursome; but Alice wouldn't hear of it. Absolushly not. Acted as if she didn't know good old Larry Revel was one of the bes' lil ole scouts in the world. Now, whaddayaknow about that?

He caught sight of the lights of a roadhouse *en passant*, and vigorously demanded that they should stop and have a drink or two, and dance. When Revel argued it was dangerous to neglect a sprained wrist, that immediate surgical attention was advisable if one were to avoid the danger of permanent injury, Lathom remembered that he was suffering intensely, pitied himself, and wept maudlin tears.

No one ventured to speak for fear of starting him off again.

Resenting this bitterly, he started of his own accord.

Harbor beacons were never more welcome to storm-tossed mariners than the ranked globes of Fifth Avenue to Revel and the two women.

Because of the delay occasioned by the accident, Nelly thought it best to drop off at the club and telephone her maid to fetch her costume from the hotel. It was almost necessary to use physical force to prevent Lathom from following her.

In the court of the Park Avenue apartment block he tried to insist that Revel be good fellow and come up-stairs for "jush

one lil drink." Without a word to Revel Alice left them to argue it out.

Eventually Revel managed to break away. Reentering the car, he stumbled over Alice's muff, and, hurrying back into the building, found the two still waiting for the elevator. He handed over the muff and in a moment of weakness ventured a "Good night."

A barely perceptible inclination of her head gave him his *congé* as definitely as her response:

"Good-by."

Revel got home about ten o'clock. It had been his intention to dress and go on to the Club de Danse. He had not definitely engaged to do so; the understanding with Nelly had been merely implicit. He didn't go. By the time he had wallowed in a hot bath, inexorable fatigue claimed him. He was desperately unhappy, but he couldn't keep his eyes open. He stretched out on the living-room couch for a brief nap, and woke up at half past three in the morning with a dry mouth, a heavy heart, and limbs as stiff as if from a hard day of unwonted exercise.

Rudge was asleep in a chair near by. Revel woke the man and packed him off to bed, mixed himself a whisky-and-soda, lighted a cigarette, remembered Alice, realized his loss, and plumbed the hell appointed. Dawn, the first he had witnessed in uncounted years, found him prowling like a caged animal.

For a long time he stared unbelievably at the strange man his dressing-mirror depicted to him—a man with whom he was unacquainted, the man who was Beau Revel stripped of all the trappings of self-illusion, viewing himself for the moment with vision unfogged by the glamour of egotism.

Overnight, he conceived, it had come true, that jest with which he had for years been used to play, no more dreaming that it ever could be true of him than man dreams that death will in the long end make him wholly a thing of naught. He saw himself at last a man of middle age.

To every man this day. Truly "whom the gods love die young."

He stepped closer and examined the face of this man whom he did not know, and with whom he must live out his span. He found gray hairs, a scattered few, above either temple, and a sprinkling of gray in the day's growth of bristles crusting chin and jowls. The skin of his face looked

shrunk; he saw depressions under the cheek-bones, a pinched effect round his nose, patches of brownish-yellow like a stain beneath his eyes. His color was not what it had been; he observed a pastiness like a film over the clear flush that had been his pride. His eyes were dull and heavy, old.

Despair laid hold on him then, in those still hours of the early day, and his vitals felt a chill that not even whisky could counteract.

There were still hours to be passed before Rudge brought his breakfast, to be served to him in bed, at the accustomed Sunday-morning time.

Sunday! A week ago his horizons had been boundless, cloudless, abrim with golden sunlight of content. To-day the skies were overcast; gray mists of melancholy pressed him close. Alice forfeited forever, Dick estranged, the favor of his closest friends threatening to become disaffected. Remained a few more years of forlorn ef-

forts to keep his head above the rising tides of time, then the slow paralysis of hope and will to live, the end of futile strugglings, the sinking, the obliteration—

It rained. Blurred window-panes looked down upon the formal plot of the old-fashioned park within its wrought-iron palings, with its dejected trees, its winding walks deserted, its patches of discouraged grass and its bloomless flower-beds, all scourged by a malignant downpour.

He spent the day indoors, too dispirited to dress or seek diversion of any sort. Not a soul disturbed him. The telephone was mute. Neglected, forgotten, he saw himself already launched upon that long decline whose foot is lost in darkness everlasting.

One thing alone was left to him—the friendship—he dared count it even more than simple friendship—of Nelly Steele.

Dwelling ever more desperately and tenderly upon this thought, Revel imagined that he loved her.

(To be concluded in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

RAIN AND THE MOUNTAIN STREAMS

THE rain has stopped—four days of rain—
The blessed sun is back again,
And all rejoice, as well they may,
To see again the lord of day.
The orchard lifts its blossomed face
To feel again his warm embrace;
And all the birds, ten thousand strong,
Open their shining beaks in song;
While in the meads a myriad flowers,
That with bent heads stood out the showers,
Straighten their dauntless backs once more;

And surely I, as these, am gay.
But oh, ye mountain brooks, that run
Mad as the rest to greet the sun,
With music sweeter to my ears
Than all the birds and all the spheres—

Harken a word I have to say!
The sun is no true friend of ours,
However good he be to flowers;
Soon shall he drink you like a cup,
With massive thirst, and dry you up;
Then shall we sadly pray for rain
To flood your songless throats again.

For, as man's breath is to the reed,
That else is but a scrannel thing,
So 'tis the rain that makes you sing.
All summer I shall have the sun,
But not again till, summer done,

Comes pluvial autumn to your need,
Shall you and I together run.

Richard Le Gallienne

At the Ward-Room Table

STRANGE TALES OF THE SEA, AS TOLD BY TRUTHFUL OFFICERS IN THEIR MESS-ROOM ON A UNITED STATES BATTLE-SHIP

By Walter Scott Meriwether

NOT long ago, by courtesy of the Navy Department, I was a guest on board the United States battle-ship Maine, when that vessel was parading the high seas for the purpose of initiating civilian volunteers into the mysteries of navy life. The officers, all of the regular service, had been assembled from various other ships and shore stations; and as they were brought together for the first time, or after long periods of separation, the ward-room mess reached its anecdotal early in the cruise.

The subject of rescues at sea had been broached by some member of the mess, and this led Lieutenant E. H. Connor into a reminiscence of the ship from which he had been detached for temporary duty on the Maine.

The vessel was the Glacier, then under the command of the late Lieutenant-Commander Spencer Douglass. She was voyaging from a Central American port to San Francisco when the lookout, just at sunset, descried a strange object silhouetted against the setting sun. Connor, officer of the deck at the time, looked at the thing, and made it out to be a small boat with two naked spars, earnest of shipwreck and of castaways. A hurried message was sent to the commander, and within a few minutes he was on the bridge, and the Glacier was heading for the spot. The floating object had only been momentarily glimpsed as the sun went under, but a compass bearing had been taken of direction.

Life-boats were cleared away and their crews sent into them—in one the surgeon with restoratives, and in the other a hospital steward with a first-aid outfit. The search-light was turned on as the Glacier neared the object. As its ray illumined the bobbing thing, there arose a clamor, and several people on the deck of the vessel

were positive that they heard voices frantically crying:

"Help! Help!"

A megaphone gaped from the bridge of the Glacier, and through it was trumpeted a reassuring shout:

"Keep where you are! We are coming to you!"

Something went wrong with the search-light, and it blinked out for a second. As soon as it was turned on, there came another clamor from the waters ahead, and, in response, another roar from the bridge, admonishing the clamorers to keep still, as they would soon be rescued.

Once more the search-light blinked out, and this time the electrician was several minutes in fixing it. When it blazed out again, there was a vast flapping of wings as a score or so of sea-gulls and pelicans arose from the trunk of a big tree, whose two naked limbs had made the trunk look like a sailboat adrift.

BEFORE THE "BONE-DRY" PERIOD

The mess next listened with melancholy interest to a reminiscence which antedated a celebrated Navy Department order—one that banished the punch-bowl and the wine-cup from all ward-rooms. The narrator was telling how he and two others went out to celebrate Thanksgiving Day, and celebrated so well that they were followed by a suspicious policeman. To throw him off the scent, they went into a grocery-store, where they bought three cabbages. Then, boarding a street-car, they began tearing off the leaves, repeating the old formula:

"She loves me, she loves me not."

But before any decision could be reached as to the state of the lady's affections, all three were thrown off the car.

"Jags," said the young gunnery-officer, as he bitterly waved aside the pitcher of

grape-juice which a ward-room mess-boy was passing around, "have a different effect on different people. Let me illustrate. Of course you all know Lieutenant X. He was the most solemn owl that ever wore brass buttons, but when he got lit up solemnity closed over him like a fog.

"One night we were moored in the Boston Navy-Yard. I am sorry to say that he had been looking upon Boston rum when it was red; but when he stalked up to the gate of the yard, about midnight, the sentries never suspected that he needed a convoy to his ship. They were building up or tearing down something in the yard just then, and the lieutenant paused to contemplate a pile of debris. As he blinked at it a great idea came to him. Pawing over a pile he found what suited him—a chunk of pig iron, weighing a hundred pounds or so. Shouldering it, he made his way on board and came into my room, where I was in my bunk and sound asleep.

"I woke up to see him weaving around with that chunk of pig iron, and asking me if I did not want it for the guns. When I said I did not, he looked so hurt that I told him I was sure the dental surgeon would want it for filling teeth. Tearfully telling me that he knew some one would appreciate his thoughtfulness in bringing it on board, he went lurching down the alleyway. After blundering in and out of several staterooms, he found the dental surgeon, and, depositing the iron on his neck, solemnly stalked off to his own room with the consciousness of duty well performed."

PLAIN TALES FROM THE FAR EAST

"I knew Lieutenant X. when we were in Cavite barracks," said a voice from across the table. "We had been playing the great American game until all hours, and he got so sleepy that after his deal his head would drop on the table and we would leave him out until the deal came around to him again. A joker got up and turned out all the lights, and we all began talking at once, all saying:

"Come on, X.—look at your hand and see if you are coming in! All in but you, and you are delaying the game!"

"There ensued a few moments of dead silence, and then a wild shriek:

"Good Lord, I'm blind!"

Through the general hum of talk was heard the story of an earnest navy medico who had been detailed to a hospital for

epileptics and insane, and who organized his patients into rival football-teams. He undertook to manage the epileptic team, and might have won had not seven members of his eleven gone off into fits at the kick-off.

There were also snatches of talk about the hard luck of a torpedo-boat commander out in the Far East, whose vessel attracted the unfavorable attention of the commander-in-chief.

"You take that eyesore out of my sight," the admiral ordered, "and don't let me see her again until she's fit to look at!"

They took her around a bend in the river and painted her red, but a P. and O. liner, coming down the river that evening, mistook her for a buoy and went aground, and then the young officer's original troubles seemed nothing at all.

This talk reminded the senior lieutenant of some of the tribulations of his younger days, when he was a junior serving on a ship in the same Eastern region—the Asiatic station.

"The old man," he said, "forgot to tell us that he had received orders to come home, and when we did hear about it the sailing date was only a day or so distant. Being junior officers, our mess was broke, as usual, and here we had to voyage from Manila to San Francisco practically without sea-stores. We hurriedly decided to sell a piano which we had just bought, and I was delegated to go over to the Cavite barracks to see if we could unload it on the marines. I made the sale for one-third of what we had paid, and turned the proceeds, a hundred dollars, over to the caterer of our mess.

"Just then a young saleswoman came on board. She was very much of a peach, and the caterer was shockingly young and exceedingly impressionable. All that she had to sell was a certain brand of sauce. The caterer fell for it, and blew in the whole hundred on that sauce. Of course I was blamed for it, too; and one day, when the swimming-call was sounded, the whole mess assumed that the caterer and I were whales, and went after us with boat-hooks. They came mighty near drowning the poor old caterer—he was the favorite whale."

A TALE OF DEEP-SEA PROFANITY

The subject of profanity having been broached, a lieutenant, known as Sunny Jim, whose reputation for veracity was no

worse than that of any of his messmates, was led into a reminiscence in which a well-known flag-officer had place. This particular officer has the reputation of being the ablest deep-sea swearer in the service, his ability in that direction being distinguished by quarter-deck elaboration and forecandle vigor.

The battle-ship Georgia was engaged in target practise, and had a stern line out to keep her breasted to the target. The flag-officer was then chief of staff, and came over from the flag-ship in a launch to see how the Georgia was getting along with her target work. The coxswain did not see the stern line. The bowman, standing up with his boat-hook and looking like part of a Macedonian phalanx, did not see it either; the result being that the line caught him and carried him overboard. The man telling the yarn, who was boat-officer at the time, went on:

"The old man let out a heavy roar and rushed forward to superintend the rescue. As the launch swung back the line caught him, and he went over, sinking several fathoms deep. While he was under the surface, up came a succession of bubbles, and as each bubble broke there burbled out of it the finest line of profanity ever heard in the Far East!"

AN IRISH MARINER'S HAPPY TIME

The paymaster said he had always doubted the accuracy of a yarn ungreeted to him years ago, when he was a green-horn in the navy, by a supposedly truthful son of the sea. It had to do with a ship that was being badly battered by a typhoon. She was running before the hurricane under bare poles, and as the sea-gaskets had carried away in the outfly, some of the crew were sent aloft to make them fast. Among these was a Milesian mariner, and it was his luck to lose his footing and plump overboard from that reeling height. As the vessel was in danger of being swamped, and all hands half expected to be drowned, no particular attention was paid to the man who had fallen from the foreyard into a sea from which it was hopeless to think of rescuing him.

But "there's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft"—you know the rest. This particular one guided Pat to the projection that serves to spread the mizzen-rigging away from the ship's hull, known to seamen as the mizzen-chains. A sea swept him up

into it, and deposited him there in a dead faint.

Some time later he recovered his senses, to find the ship in quieter waters, and beneath him an open port which he recognized as one leading to the captain's pantry—a sedulously guarded store-place of good eatables. The famished sailor made his way in through the port, and consumed so much of the captain's private stock that he lay in a comatose state for many hours. On returning to the beauties of a sea life which he had forgotten for a space, he again gorged himself so heavily that it was a long time to the awakening.

And so it went, day after day, until at last Pat's conscience smote him, and he bethought himself of some way of officially rejoining ship. To this end he watched through the port-hole until the seas were utterly calm. Then, lowering himself from the port, he dropped quietly into the sea and allowed the becalmed craft to drift some hundreds of feet from him. At that distance he set up a hullabaloo and came swimming after her, hand over hand.

There was great excitement on the ship. The captain ran aft and stared at the apparition coming up astern. The crew, equally dumfounded, also gathered aft. A sea-ladder was thrown overside, and up it clambered the bedraggled swimmer.

"Great Scott, Pat!" demanded the astonished skipper, "where, in the name of Neptune, did you come from?"

"Sor," said Pat, with a twist of his forelock, "I've been swimming after the ship for ten days an' have just overtook her!"

HIS MAJESTY THE SHIP'S WRITER

At this point the ship's writer—a very important person on shipboard, although an enlisted man—came in to see the executive officer about a matter of detail. This brought a reminiscence from another member of the party, who had been a ship's writer himself a good many years earlier, to show that the ship's writers of those times were as important then as now. The speaker was Gus C. Roeder, of the staff of the *New York World*. He was attached to the old steam-frigate Tennessee at the time when she was flag-ship of the North Atlantic station, and in addition to his duties as writer, he had been assigned to the office of the admiral—a combination which left him but little leisure.

On board the Tennessee was Tom Demp-

sey, a grizzled old quartermaster, and one of the most celebrated of sea-lawyers. It was at Roeder's busiest hour that this ancient mariner had occasion to see him on a matter relating to a new cook for his mess. Roeder told him to go away and come back later. Dempsey went, and on his return got the same reply. A third time he essayed to get the ear of the busy Roeder, and, failing again, went forward, scratching his grizzled head and communing with himself.

Eventually he showed up at the mast. Lieutenant—now Rear-Admiral—William Wirt Kimball was officer of the deck. He asked Dempsey what he wanted, and was amazed to hear that the quartermaster wanted to see the first lieutenant, Lieutenant T. D. Lyons. There were several futile questions as to what he wanted to see him about, and eventually Kimball walked aft, knocked on the door of the executive, and informed him that Dempsey was at the mast and wanted to see him.

"What is it you want, Dempsey?" Lyons asked.

"Sor, I would loike yer permission to spake to the captain."

The astonished executive in vain endeavored to find the reason for the extraordinary request, but Dempsey doggedly

refused to disclose it; and at last the orderly was summoned and told to report to Captain Oscar F. Stanton that an enlisted man was at the mast and wanted to see him. That very genial and kindly officer soon appeared, and, joining the group at the mast, asked Dempsey what was wanted.

"Sor," said Dempsey, "I would loike yer permission to spake to the admiral."

Never in all his long career had the captain heard of such a request coming from an enlisted man, and it required all the eloquence of the astute old sea-lawyer to attain his end. Finally a reluctant order was given to the orderly to say to the commander-in-chief, Rear-Admiral James E. Jouett, that an enlisted man was at the mast and had some mysterious and undisclosed reason for seeing him.

As the gunpowdery old admiral emerged from his cabin, he was met by the three other officers, who told him of the progressive stages of Dempsey's singular request. In a voice like the tones in which he had roared orders from the Metacomet in the battle of Mobile Bay, the admiral asked Dempsey what in all blazes he wanted.

"Sor," replied the ancient, "I would loike yer permission to spake to the ship's writer!"

FROM ISLE AND SEA

WHEN down the craggy coasts the lights
Of harbor and of headland burn,
With stars in nets of silver caught
The singing tides return.

I hear their voices through the dusk
Forever chanting of the sea,
Of voyages far to happy isles
And hills of mystery.

So from the happy isles that lie
Dim and uncharted in your heart,
Across the sea of years to me
The singing waters start.

I hear their voices in the dusk,
But cannot read their mystic speech,
And softly dies their song away
To silence on the beach.

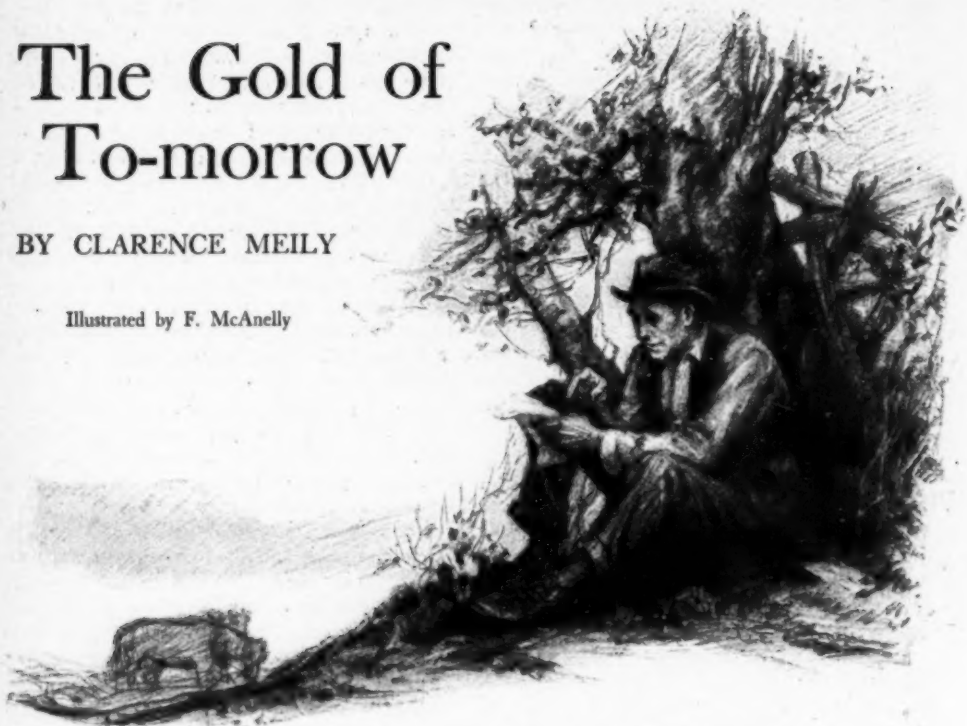
So ever does your tenderness
Show how your heart's great love can be,
Though spoken not, high as the stars
And boundless as the sea!

Arthur Wallace Peach

The Gold of To-morrow

BY CLARENCE MEILY

Illustrated by F. McAnelly



HE GOT OUT THE LETTER AGAIN, TO MAKE SURE OF HIS PREMISES

AT eleven o'clock the sun grew warm in the tiny valley between the gravelly hills of Mr. Murdock's farm — so warm that Mr. Murdock halted the horses in a half-finished furrow and betook himself to the shade of a near-by tree.

The spring plowing was in arrears, but then there were so many other things in arrears about Mr. Murdock that the spring plowing was not therefore unpleasantly conspicuous.

In fact, Mr. Murdock was, in a way, the victim of thwarting circumstances. He had within him, he felt, large executive capacities, but fate had given him no opportunity for anything but manual labor. He had not met this misjudgment with resignation, but had seen in it a challenge to his mental ingenuity. There were ways of making money without toil. Indeed, Mr. Murdock was a sufficiently advanced sociologist to realize that work never got anybody anywhere, anyway. Wealth came as the result of forethought, alertness, daring. He had a chance to exercise these qualities in his pocket at this very moment. Supine in the

shade of the tree, Mr. Murdock withdrew the letter and read it for the third time that morning.

DEAR FRIEND:

Your name has been given to us by ex-Congressman Bulger, of your district, as one of the prominent and substantial citizens of your community, whose indorsement will carry great weight in the promotion of any forward-looking, aggressive enterprise.

You have doubtless realized the romance and fascination of gold-mining, but have you ever considered it as a serious business proposition in which you yourself might profitably engage? Do you know that the gold production of the United States approximates eighty-five million dollars annually, and that somebody gets this enormous sum of money? Do you know that one mine in Arizona pours out a golden flood of one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars a month? Do you know that *once ore is discovered*, gold-mining is among the safest, most reliable, and most profitable of enterprises?

The Playa del Oro Gold Mining and Development Company has recently acquired from the original locators the famous Homestead Mine, in the Sockeye district of western Arizona, in the very center of the most fruitful gold-field known in recent years. The Homestead is not a prospect. *It is a developed mine.* Ore in place has already been discovered. Only a little further exploration

and development are necessary, we confidently believe, to disclose one of the biggest-paying properties ever known in the Southwest.

In order to carry out this development, the Playa del Oro Gold Mining and Development Company is placing on the market a limited amount of its fully paid-up and non-assessable capital stock, at the sacrificial figure of ten cents per share. This stock has a par value of one dollar. In order to place it favorably before the people of your community, and to secure the highly valued favor of your personal indorsement of our enterprise, we make you, in strict confidence, the following proposition:

For each thousand shares of our stock which you purchase at the cash price of one hundred dollars, either for yourself or for resale to your neighbors, we will issue to you, *free of charge*, an additional one thousand shares to be held for yourself alone.

Act quickly, as this offer may be withdrawn at any time, and must be withdrawn at the end of thirty days. Make all checks payable to the undersigned.

THE PLAYA DEL ORO GOLD MINING AND
DEVELOPMENT COMPANY,
C. SCROGGS, President.

Mr. Murdock folded the letter slowly and returned it to his pocket. He plucked a near-by stalk of grass and chewed it with dignified calmness, as a man should who has just received the novel information that he is one of the prominent and substantial citizens of his community; but inside he was not so calm.

He realized that the offer contained in the letter might be withdrawn at any time, and would certainly be withdrawn at the end of thirty days; and he was hampered by the customary, but none the less irritating, embarrassment of lack of funds. He could not mortgage the farm, because he had already done that to buy stock in a Panama rubber company, which had not yet begun to pay dividends. He might sell the team, omitting the spring plowing altogether; but he hesitated to cross his wife, who held views of a militant nature concerning the rights of her sex. He might mortgage the crop, if he had one; but he knew by experience that legal difficulties lay in the way of mortgaging something that did not exist. It was the old struggle of fate to keep a good man down.

The hour of noon approaching, Mr. Murdock rose to unharness the horses. And then, just as he emerged into the sunlight, the big idea came to him with the explosive force of a hand-grenade. It dazzled him, bewildered him, inspired him. He went back into the shade and sat down to think it over.

At first, it was not so much the idea itself that intrigued him, as his own genius in conceiving it. A complacent smile overspread his countenance, and he tapped his forehead significantly with the end of a soiled forefinger. He knew all the time it was in there, and now it had come out—in a flash, just like that!

That was the way the great captains of industry thought up things, and capitalized their ideas, and owned the country. Wall Street itself couldn't have done better.

He got out the letter again, to make sure of his premises. Yes, it said it, all right. He could buy the first thousand shares for himself, or to sell to his neighbors, and then he got the second thousand free. Very well, he would sell the first thousand to somebody else—the Widow Wadhams, for instance; and have the second thousand for nothing! Such was the big idea.

Mr. Murdock was so enamored of his plan that he decided to forego agricultural labor for the afternoon and go and see the widow at once. He unhitched the horses, led them to the corral, and sidled into the house. Here he fell under the accusing eye of his wife.

"What's the matter now?" she asked in the tone of one who knows the truth but plans to have it confirmed for oratorical purposes.

"Well, it's dinner-time, ain't it?" Mr. Murdock said evasively.

"You didn't bring them horses to the corral just to feed 'em," declared his spouse. "You're goin' to quit work agin."

"I got a little business to 'tend to, Nancy," Mr. Murdock pleaded. "It 'll only take a few hours, and like as not it 'll make our fortune."

"What you goin' to mortgage now?" wailed Mrs. Murdock in direful alarm. "Ain't I had enough to put up with without bein' set out into the road? A body 'd think you was aimin' to lay in enough of them corporation papers to get out o' cuttin' wood for the hull of next winter, and me without a rag to my back or a roof over my head!"

"Honest, Nancy, I ain't goin' to spend a cent this time—not a penny," interrupted her husband, bravely stemming the tide. "I'm goin' to make 'em give me the stock this time without puttin' in a penny."

"How come?" said Mrs. Murdock, so dumfounded that it was all she could say.

Mr. Murdock quickly availed himself of

the opportunity to explain the big idea. When she fully understood that nothing more was involved than an afternoon's idleness, his wife was so mollified that she filed only a formal protest against his arraying himself in his Sunday clothes and spending several hours in the company of the comely Widow Wadhams.

Dressed in his best, Mr. Murdock was an engaging figure of a man. He was not too old to have retained a certain youthful grace, and he had a natural affinity for the habiliments of leisure that made him seem at home in them. He had, too, a dandified but sound taste in dress, so that one would have to look twice to see the uncouth peasant beneath the spruce gentleman. He possessed a natural suavity that was an excellent substitute for conventional good form, and he had a ready utterance that enabled him to hide any *contretemps* beneath an easy flow of words. Inevitably, he was a favorite with all ladies who did not have to depend upon him for a living.

The broad, loamy fields of the Widow Wadhams's three-hundred-acre farm adjoined Mr. Murdock's sixty, but whereas the latter was for the most part stony upland, the Widow Wadhams possessed fine bottom-lands which yielded fruitfully with the regularity of the seasons. Mr. Murdock had often surveyed the Wadhams farm with a poignant, not to say personal, interest. What it needed, he knew, was management. If some one, say a man of unusual executive ability, had hold of it—and forthwith Mr. Murdock would begin to dream of the many things that should be done, and undone, and otherwise done on the Wadhams farm; in which pleasant reverie he would forget with more than usual completeness the things that ought to have been done on his own. To-day, however, he was too busy with the big idea to bother about the farm.

The Widow Wadhams lived alone in the big, sprawling, comfortable farmhouse, save for the companionship of a maiden sister and the hired help. The maiden sister, named Abigail, was a lean, efficient, sardonic person, whom Mr. Murdock did not enjoy. The widow, on the other hand, was small and plump, winsome and confiding, with a fine sense of humor, which he found very pleasant, though he was not always able to follow its subtleties.

He faced this latter difficulty now, as he sauntered up to the deep, vine-clad, shady

porch where the widow sat knitting, and was met by her smiling greeting.

"Why, Jed, got all your spring plowing done so soon? My, but you're energetic!"

"Well, not exactly, Mis' Wadhams," Jedidiah answered. "Fact is, I stopped work a bit to come over on a matter of business."

"Business!" cried the widow gaily. "Oh, I know! You want to see about rebuilding that line fence along my west forty. I've been hoping you'd say something about it."

"Well, not exactly that," Mr. Murdock explained gently. "What I come over about is more in the nature of an investment. Did you ever get interested in gold-mining, Mis' Wadhams?"

The widow shook her shapely head.

"Only the gold you get out of pumpkins and put into pies, Jed," she told him. "It's about the prettiest gold I know of."

"This is real gold, I mean," Mr. Murdock said, with a trace of restraint in his manner as a rebuke to her levity. "This here's a mining proposition."

The widow made silent apology by placing a chair for him, taking his hat, and calling to one of the maids to bring a pitcher of iced tea. Mr. Murdock relaxed in sensuous comfort preparatory to entering upon the line of activity he most favored—the exercise of his imagination.

He did not at once refer to the letter, deeming it better to stimulate his hearer's romantic interest in the general subject by tales of adventurous daring and glittering reward. When he finally did reach the concrete proposal, he still refrained from exhibiting the letter itself, merely referring to it as a highly confidential communication, opening up a very exclusive opportunity for profit. On the whole, he could see that the widow was impressed.

"How much of the stock are you going to take, Jed?" she asked.

"Well, Mis' Wadhams," said Mr. Murdock, "I'm aimin' to get the same amount I suggested that you take, five thousand shares. I'd like to get more, but the fact is, I'm a little short o' ready cash just at present, and I don't like to borrow none, though I make no doubt it would pay me to do so. But my wife ain't got no business turn, Mis' Wadhams, and she don't stand back of me as I could wish. Not that I blame her none, bein' a woman, but it hampers me in my ambitions."

"Yes," agreed the widow sympathet-

ically, "it's too bad not to have a genuine comradeship in such a relation. Well, it would be a little hard for me to raise five hundred dollars just now, myself; but I might put in three hundred."

Jedidiah was so overjoyed at this success of the big idea that he had difficulty in preserving the calm, businesslike exterior shown by Wall Street capitalists in concluding their momentous deals. He did it, however.

"You won't regret it none, Mis' Wadhams, I feel sure o' that," he said. "I'll be partners with you in the venture, and I'll look out for your interests same as I do for my own. A woman naturally needs a man to look out for business matters like this here."

"I've often felt the need," said the widow demurely.

II

SPRING slipped into summer and summer into autumn, and though the Playa del Oro Gold Mining and Development Company continued to sell a limited amount of stock from an apparently unlimited reservoir, it somehow failed to pay any dividends. Added to this unexpected disappointment was the fact that Mr. Murdock's crops were as poor as usual, and that Nancy, his wife, went into a decline—for no apparent cause except that her poor body declined, it seemed, to bear the burden of this life any longer.

After resorting to a picturesquely variegated list of patent medicines, Jedidiah at last called in a physician, who prescribed, as doctors always do, such impossible things as good food, plenty of sleep, relaxation, rest—above all, rest. Nancy herself realized the earthly impossibility of any such course of treatment, and it was a comfort to Jedidiah that she did so, since it relieved him of any measure of self-reproach. With renewed faith, he purchased more patent medicines.

But as the wistful pageantry of the leaves receded into the background of the fall, and the chill winds arose, the injunction of a greater leech than any human, that of nature itself, compelled Nancy to sit of afternoons by the western window, leaving her work undone. The failing sunlight, glowing redly through the frayed curtains, painted for her visions of hope such as her childhood had known, but now forever beyond fulfilment in this life. There were

palaces there, in the western sky, and domed temples, and gates of brazen fire; and sometimes it almost seemed to her that she could hear the sound of celestial harps. And then her impoverished, tremulous lips would form for her the language of an old text, somewhat amended in justice to her husband:

Where the shiftless cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

When Jedidiah came home from town late one evening he found her so, the dying coals of the sunset ineffectual to warm her chilled face.

It cannot be said that Jedidiah was insensible to the dun tragedy of Nancy's death. His regret that she could not have lived to share his forthcoming opulence with him was very real. She deserved it, he knew, though how much she had deserved it he would never know.

Moreover, the loneliness, at first reposing, but in the end a little spectral, and his masculine helplessness about the house, pressed heavily upon him, leading him more and more frequently to drop in of an afternoon at the Widow Wadhams's house, where he could exchange large-minded business views and shrewd financial counsel for many practical hints of housewifery.

The widow was undeniably impressed by Jedidiah. His fluent talk of stocks and bonds, of capitalization, treasury stock, bonuses, pools, underwriters' agreements, and so on, spoke to her a new and awe-inspiring language. That this recondite knowledge had never taken form in visible assets, so to speak, did not seem significant when the principle of the ratio between risk and return was explained to her in the glow of his refulgent optimism. His fortune was embryonic, perhaps, but is not the gold of to-morrow ever more real than the abstinence of to-day?

"There's that worthless Jed Murdock comin' up the road agin," remarked the spinster sister, Abigail, one afternoon, as Mr. Murdock, in the full splendor of a new silver-gray spring suit, set off by a huge lavender tie embroidered in green and yellow, came into sight around a bend.

"I can't allow you to speak that way of my friends," the widow said, frowning.

"Humph, friends! I guess it ain't friends he wants to be so much as something nearer and dearer," sneered the veteran maiden.

"Oh, do you think so?" cried the widow,

and her cheeks flushed with what might perhaps have been indignation, and yet perhaps might not.

"Ain't you got three hundred acres of the finest bottom-land in the county?"

"Abigail!" cried the widow, so wrathfully that Abigail found it convenient to

disappear up the stairs as Jedidiah rang the bell.

Indeed, a variety of motives had led to Mr. Murdock's call that afternoon. Ostensibly he had come to bring a fresh report from the Playa del Oro Gold Mining and Development Company, to the effect that its shaft had reached the two-hundred-foot level, disclosing a formation identical with the famous ore-beds of Goldfield, and also offering a limited amount of additional stock for sale. But he did not insist on this report as the chief subject of conversation.

"I get more and more disgusted with bachin' every day," he re-



"ABIGAIL THOMAS, DO YOU MEAN TO TELL ME YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH MY HUSBAND'S PRIVATE PAPERS? WHY, I NEVER HEARD THE LIKE! IT'S POSITIVELY DISGRACEFUL!"

marked, when he was seated by the widow's side in the comfortable living-room. "I've about made up my mind to rent my house and do something else. It's pretty hard for a man to be all alone in this world."

"It's hard for anybody, I think," agreed the widow.

"Well, in some ways a woman's better off, because she can run a house," commented Jedidiah. "But then agin she's worse off, because she can't attend so well to business. Now you and me could supplement one another pretty fine, don't you think, Mary?"

The widow blushed. He had never called her Mary before. She glanced covertly at his very presentable figure in the new spring suit.

"Do you think so?" she asked with girlish shyness.

Though captious persons might in times past have referred without admiration to Mr. Murdock's energy and initiative, no one could have fairly criticised him now. He had, in truth, a way with women.

"I know it!" he protested fervently, as he slipped an arm around the widow's yielding waist. "I know it, and you know it, and there ain't anybody else to consider. You need a man to look after things, and I need you to look after me. There ain't another woman in the world I'd look at, Mary, but I'm yours, if you say the word."

She found his embrace very comforting. It seemed to relieve her of a load of responsibility, to make life safe and warm.

For Jedidiah, it was rather a supreme moment. He had found one woman who was temporarily convinced that he was a desirable acquisition.

"Oh, Jed!" murmured the widow, burying her face in the breast of his new spring coat.

And Jedidiah, having triumphantly completed her encirclement with the other arm, gazed over her head out of the window at the sunny, fecund acres of the widow's demesne, with a proprietary enthusiasm that saw in their smiling expanse the long-delayed grin of the goddess Fortuna herself.

III

MR. MURDOCK'S incorporation into the widow's household was effected with a promptness which went far to refute any imputation of indolence that might have attached to his reputation in the past, yet

which failed signally to ingratiate him with that pillar of skepticism, the dour maiden, Abigail. Concerning her new brother-in-law, Abigail entertained neither faith nor illusion; but she realized the inadvisability, at the moment, of any adequate expression of her views. She had no mind to imperil her own welfare, even in the seductive duty of giving good counsel. She contented herself, therefore, with pointing out in some detail what was to be expected, and then waiting in patience till she could clinch the point with an irrefutable "I told you so!"

Meantime, Jedidiah was suffered to put his managerial abilities into action on the farm, with results that were often sufficiently complicated to be debatable. If he did not like to work himself, he certainly did enjoy directing others, and when in charge of a gang of harvesters, for instance, he would fairly exhaust the dramatic possibilities of the occasion. And since, when the men learned to ignore him and go ahead in the customary way, enough work was done to yield him a certain credit, Abigail saw that the expected hour of her vindication might be long in tarrying. This led her to animadvert upon other angles of Jedidiah's past performance.

"Seems like that there gold stock ought to be payin' dividends by now," she remarked casually to her sister one evening, when Jedidiah had gone to the village to mail a coupon requesting full information about a new oil proposition, which was to be sent him free without obligation on his part.

"Jed's sure it will before long," Mary answered. "They're down four hundred feet now, and the formation's just like Cripple Creek. They're going to sell a limited amount of stock to put the shaft down another hundred feet, and then Jed's sure they'll make good."

"Did he want you to buy some more of this limited stock?" Abigail queried suspiciously.

"He mentioned it," Mary admitted, "but I don't know as he'd insist on it, though he thinks we ought to stand by the company. He's more interested in oil now."

"H-m!" sniffed Abigail. "I should think he'd had enough oil, and rubber, and Panama land, and wave-motors, and cold light, and telautophone, and Arkansas diamond, and—"

"What on earth are you talking about?" demanded her sister, staring.

"I'm talkin' about Jed Murdock's investments, if you want to know," said the acrid Abigail. "He's got a hull trunk full of 'em up in the hall close by your room."

"Abigail Thomas," cried the second Mrs. Murdock indignantly, "do you mean to tell me that you've been going through my husband's private papers? Why, I never heard the like! It's positively disgraceful!"

"You can go up there and see for yourself," sneered Abigail. "I reckon there's about a billion dollars' worth there, goin' by the figures printed on their face. It's quite instructive to see how much a man can be fooled."

Mrs. Murdock gave her a withering look and started for the stairs, to repeat Abigail's unheard-of performance. Out of the depths of the closet she dragged a small, old-fashioned, rawhide trunk, and flung it open. It was even as the other had said. A Golconda of unrealized hopes flowed through her fingers.

Jedidiah's investments had begun in early manhood and had covered a period of some twenty years. In a museum of financial curiosities they would have had a unique and valued place. Scarcely a bogus promotion during the whole period of his activity had escaped him. Gold and oil and precious stones, agricultural and horticultural experiments, weird inventions that testified to undoubted genius of conception, even if they never would work, all things which a "fall guy" may covet or a "come-easy" delight in, had been garnered in that trunk. His wife surveyed the contents with growing wonder and consternation.

There was correspondence, too. With a feminine affinity for letters, she opened some of this. In particular, an envelope bearing the not unfamiliar return-card of the Playa del Oro Gold Mining and Development Company caught her eye. She read the epistle it contained with sadly mingled emotions. One sentence rang in her mind the knell of a fond but uninformed faith. It ran:

For each thousand shares of our stock which you purchase at the cash price of one hundred dollars, either for yourself or for resale to your neighbors, we will issue to you, *free of charge*, an additional one thousand shares to be held for yourself alone.



And Jedidiah had led her to believe that he had put his own money into this thing! It was bad enough to realize that the man whom she had believed to be a real business man had been automatically buncoed for two decades, and was still in a state of active receptivity. A trusting wife does not like to wake up to the fact that her husband is chiefly remarkable for permanently heading the sucker-list of a continent. But it was considerably worse to discover that Jedidiah had intentionally abused her faith in him for his own selfish profit. Never, never, could she forgive that!

So, with such tears as are inseparable from the reassessment of connubial values, Mary restored the letter, closed the trunk, shoved it back into the closet, and locked herself in her own room. It seemed to her that she would never care to see Jedidiah again, and she knew she had no desire to see Abigail.



JEDIDIAH HALF ROSE FROM HIS CHAIR AND SAT DOWN AGAIN. HE WOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING—HE DID NOT QUITE KNOW WHAT—IF HE HAD NOT FELT SO GIDDY

Quite unconscious of this penetration of his mask, however, Mr. Murdock continued in the full tide of conjugal prosperity, and flourished like a green bay-tree. He was practically the owner of the finest three-hundred-and-sixty-acre farm in that section of the State, and day by day he improved on his rendition of the part. To behold him in town of a market-day, dealing condescendingly with storekeepers and graciously accepting cigars from bank presidents, was

to see an unforgettable impersonation of entrenched affluence. So naturally and completely did the rôle fit him that it took the sardonic gaze of Abigail, fastened on him like a cold shower, to mitigate his solemn joy. It was Abigail alone who stood between him and that perfect merger with his environment which would have constituted a sort of financial nirvana.

Sometimes Mr. Murdock rather contemplated getting rid of Abigail—diplomat-

ically, of course, through the agency of an old ladies' home or something, when Mary could be brought to see the idea in the right light. He cherished this benevolent purpose toward his sister-in-law, not so much through any definite sentiment of rivalry, as because she was the fly in his ointment, the skeleton at his feast.

If anything ever happened to Mary—of course he earnestly hoped that nothing would, but if it did—well, he'd soon show her what was what. There wouldn't be two bosses around that farm very long. There would be no argument, no back talk. He would simply lay down the law. If she didn't like it, she would have to get out. Maybe she'd have to get out anyway. And Mr. Murdock looked afar over the rich fields, as if trying with mortal eye to penetrate the golden curtain of the future, which swayed tantalizingly to the current of his fancy.

And then, quite suddenly, something did happen to Mary. A cold, developing into influenza, then pneumonia, a flurry of doctors and scurry of nurses, curious neighbors, Abigail's scared, white face—and out of all these confused and tumultuous impressions the arresting fact that he was once more a widower.

Following the funeral, Jedidiah's emotional state might be described as sadness silver-lined with anticipation. The mantle of ownership which he had hitherto worn vicariously was to become his in very truth. He would be a rich man. Nor would he stop with owning the farm. That would be a mere stepping-stone. It would furnish him with the capital he had so long needed to make the big financiers of the country sit up and take notice. He'd show 'em what brains and skill and audacity could do in rigging the stock-market! Give him five years, or even two years, and it would be somebody bigger than country bank presidents that would be inviting him to dinner and taking him cruising on private yachts.

Jedidiah felt it in him. He felt the call of the great indoors. All he waited for was the reading of the will.

The will was important because, as the farm had been Mary's separate estate, it was subject to devise; but though important, Jedidiah regarded it only as a vexatious formality which temporarily stood in the way of the exercise of his talents within their normal sphere. He was very glad

when the day arrived for the ceremony of its perusal.

The company of beneficiaries was summoned by old Mr. Carmichael, who for years had been Mary's attorney, to meet at the farmhouse. They assembled one afternoon in the big living-room—Abigail and Jedidiah, the three Hempill cousins, from Martinsburg, all in their Sunday finery, and Cousin Elizabeth, from the city, with her pretty daughter Muriel. Muriel formed so novel and delightful a picture in the somewhat homely setting that Jedidiah could not keep his vagrant gaze from returning again and again to her dainty figure and deliciously pink and charming face. He had welcomed Cousin Elizabeth and her daughter with the best blending of ceremony and effusive warmth at his command, and had remained steadfastly in their vicinity ever since, in the chaste privilege of kinship and mutual sorrow.

Jedidiah had arrayed himself on this occasion in all the splendor that his widowerhood would allow. His black frock coat was tailor-made and fitted perfectly. His black trousers were wrinkleless. His black patent leathers were brand-new. He had softened the too-solemn effect of mourning with a puff tie of cream-colored silk held in place by an imitation pink pearl. He exhaled a delicate odor of violet. Jedidiah felt that in the way of apparel Fifth Avenue had nothing on him that day.

Mr. Carmichael had been last to arrive, and, after introductions and some desultory conversation, had seated himself close to one of the windows, where the light was good. Amid a reverent hush, he drew forth the pregnant envelope bearing the indorsement: "Last Will and Testament of Mary Thomas Murdock." The crackling of the paper was the only sound as he broke the seals and took out the instrument.

"Friends," said Mr. Carmichael, as he held it poised ritualistically in his fingers, "we are assembled here this afternoon to learn the last wishes of your dear relative and my esteemed client, the late Mrs. Murdock. I might preface this solemn moment by a heartfelt eulogy of the deceased, but in this company such an appreciation is needless. You knew her many virtues better even than did I. I proceed, therefore, without delay, to a reading of the document, trusting I shall have your undivided attention."

The exhortation was superfluous. They

hung on his every word. Mr. Carmichael cleared his throat and began:

"In the name of God. Amen.

"I, Mary Thomas Murdock, being of the age of forty-three years, and of sound mind and disposing memory, do make and publish this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all other wills and testamentary dispositions heretofore made by me.

"Item first—"

The first item concerned the disposition of certain personal mementoes to each of the relatives, Jedidiah receiving a Bible and a pair of earrings. Then followed small bequests to the Hempills, scarcely more than recognitions of relationship, with which, however, they seemed eminently pleased. There were also small gifts to an orphan's home and to the cause of missions.

Then came the first surprise of the day, a bequest of five hundred dollars to Muriel to aid her in completing her musical education. Jedidiah beamed at this, graciously, generously. He caught Muriel's delighted glance and smiled in gay benediction. It was just as if he had given her the money out of his own pocket. She must have felt so, too, for she blushed most prettily.

Jedidiah was in the full glow of his self-satisfaction when the second surprise came. The room swam, and Jedidiah was of the distinct impression that a cyclone had struck the premises.

"How's that?" he demanded hoarsely.

Mr. Carmichael hemmed ceremoniously and read it again:

"I give and bequeath to my beloved husband, Jedidiah Murdock, three thousand shares of the

capital stock of the Playa del Oro Gold Mining and Development Company, the same having been purchased by me on his recommendation, which is all that he shall receive from my estate except as herein otherwise provided."

Jedidiah half rose from his chair and sat down again. He would have done something—he did not quite know what—if he had not felt so giddy. Muriel was looking at him, too. With a mighty effort he set his jaw in stern composure, though his face was very white. There was still a slender thread of hope in that "herein otherwise provided." He listened in an agony of attention, breathing heavily.

"I give, devise, and bequeath all the rest and residue of my estate of whatever nature, real, personal, or mixed, including my farm of three hundred acres situated in Haskins Township, Seargo County, and known as The Hedges, to my beloved sister, Abigail Thomas—

"What's that?" asked Mr. Carmichael, stopping and looking at Jedidiah.

That betrayed and bamboozled victim choked again, but utterance would not come. What were mere words, anyway, at such a moment?

"Oh, cheer up!" said Mr. Carmichael. "It isn't so bad. Listen to this."

And then, as if within and behind the lawyer's voice there echoed a trill of ghostly, satirical laughter from beyond the grave, came the concluding clause:

"Enjoining upon my said sister that she do provide my said husband, during the rest of his unmarried life, with necessary food and clothing, and also convenient pocket-money not exceeding the sum of three dollars per month."

TRUTH AND LIE

(After the Persian of Mirra Aslou)

He who loves the truth must have
Ever at hand a saddled steed
To serve his instant need.

He who thinks the truth must keep
His foot into the stirrup thrust,
Lest he be ground to dust.

He who speaks the truth must grow
Wings back of either arm
To lift him high from harm.

But he who lives the lie has need
Of neither stirrup, steed,
Nor wings about his head—
For he's already dead!

Harry Kemp

What a Blind Man Can Do

HOW DR. HARRY S. WILL, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO, IN SPITE OF THE LOSS OF HIS SIGHT, HAS MADE HIMSELF A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER AND AN ACTIVE AND USEFUL CITIZEN

By Carl Holliday

FOR a blind man to obtain an ordinary college education is considered remarkable; but when a sightless student obtains not only the B.A., but the advanced degrees of M.A. and Ph.D., based on research so intensive as to baffle many a candidate with good eyes, it is nothing short of a marvel.

Such, nevertheless, is the accomplishment of Harry S. Will, of Toledo, Ohio. And now Dr. Will has gone one better; he has recently been appointed professor of sociology in what is probably the most strenuous

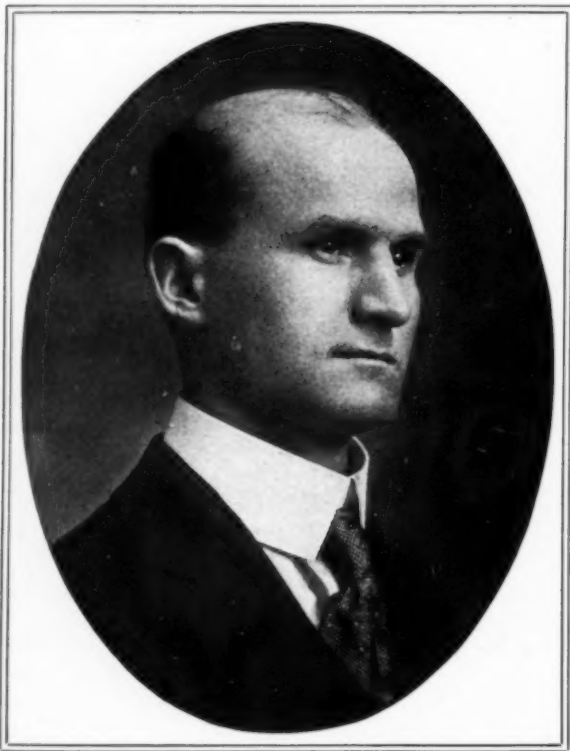
municipal university in America—the University of Toledo.

"I believe I have proved that there is no limit to the education of the blind," said Professor Will to me recently, and as I looked at his determined face, and considered what he had accomplished, I could not help agreeing with him. "Even in the grades I was hampered by having very poor eyesight. The teachers put me in the front row, but when they explained figures on the board, I didn't know what they were talking about."

And yet he graduated with high honors from a Toledo high school, and made such a remarkable showing upon receiving his bachelor's degree at Ohio State University that a graduate research fellowship worth five hundred dollars was given him.

A research fellowship for a blind man! But the decision of the awarding committee proved a wise one; for Will wrote as his doctor's thesis a statistical study so keen and enlightening that it has proved of unusual value to sociologists and psychologists. It deals with the comparative mentality and potential leadership of country, city, and village boys, and completely disproves Whittier's poetical idea about the "barefoot boy with cheek of tan." Dr. Will has proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the city boy has it on the rural boy in quick reaction, initiative, ability to organize and lead, and a number of other points.

How could a blind man make such an investigation successfully?



DR. HARRY S. WILL, RECENTLY APPOINTED PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

"I never saw one of the curves and diagrams of differences, similarities, and ratios that went into my thesis," Dr. Will said. "I directed others how to make my experiments, I collected my data, and described in detail how the curves and diagrams should be drawn, and the examining committee found them correct."

It sounds still more improbable, but it is true, that during three of those studious years this blind man was supervisor of social centers for the city of Columbus, the capital of Ohio. He introduced some novel ideas there, too—such as roping off certain sections of streets for roller-skating, inducing children to undertake gardening, teaching folk-dances to the little ones, and to some of the big ones also; in short, showing the community its community possibilities of enjoying life.

"How do I do it?" said Dr. Will. "I seek the natural leaders of the community, the dominating, talkative factors in the barber-shop, the corner grocery, the drug-store; I get them together and show them how they lack solidarity, and I try to give them a vision of what they might be doing in their community."

Up to his junior year in college Dr. Will could see dimly, and as a sophomore he played football and was a zealous member of the university track-team; but in his junior year his eyes practically gave out—only a slight difference between light and darkness remaining for him. Most men would have given up in despair.

"I had to reconstruct my whole method of life," explained Will; "I devised entirely

new systems of study. I learned to translate with utmost speed all auditory images into visual images. And to-day I see everything that I hear."

He made agreements with other students to study together, and in this way he learned French, German, and various branches of mathematics; he stood high in psychology; he even went to some extent into the study of biology.

"Above all," Dr. Will recently told me, "I determined to be normal; for most blind people allow themselves to become more or less abnormal."

He learned to typewrite with speed, learned the point system of reading for the blind, and even studied vocal music.

"I was determined that the world should be interesting for me," he said. And through it all he asked and allowed no sympathy. "If ever I caught a professor attempting to be sympathetic toward me, I started an argument or a fuss, and very soon lost his sympathy. I went through college on my merit, not on my handicap."

It is evident that he did; for he paid his own way with his earnings as a farm-hand, a writer, a salesman, and a manager of salesmen. In the last-mentioned capacity he trained some of the most hustling young drummers in Columbus.

Dr. Will is not only a teacher at Toledo University; he is to have charge of the division of civic social activities and investigations in the Bureau of Municipal Welfare and Research connected with the university. Is there, after all, such a thing as a handicap to a human being?

AT A SYRIAN JEWELER'S

THE Syrian who kept the store
Said that he hailed from Zor, from Zor
Rare jewel of a name!—
Said that from Zor, from Zor he came,
In tones that made me dream.

For lo, the emerald in his palm
Flickered and lost its glassy calm,
And seemed to swell and spread and roar
From there to Samarkand.

And lo, the opal in his hand
Became as large,
Became as grand,
As any mighty sultan's barge
With sails of limpid cream,
And carried him to Zor, to Zor,
His mournful eyes agleam.

Richard Butler Glaenser

Please Pass the Pepper

BY KAY CLEAVER STRAHAN

Illustrated by F. W. Small

CONSCIOUS suddenly of his shirt-sleeves, his limp collar, and yesterday's shave, Ward Readway removed himself from the front window of his drug-store into the back room with a precipitancy which almost amounted to a scramble. There, behind the little window labeled "Prescriptions" and its screen of bottles, he peered out to see the girl come in.

She walked briskly, as if she were going somewhere and getting there in a hurry. She was small and dark and pert and pointed. She wore a dapper navy-blue suit and she was the serenest, coolest, most refreshing bit of person Ward had seen during all of that piping hot summer, not forgetting the Georgette-crape ladies nor the white-linen girls with their deeply V'ed middy blouses.

His one clerk, Lily Upshar, advanced languidly to meet her.

"I want, if you please," the girl began, and Ward's jaw dropped, for her uncertain, tremulous voice suited her precisely as well as a pink feather boa would have matched her costume—"I want some tooth-paste."

"Wha' kind?" condescended Lily.

"Well," demurred the girl, "I'd like the best you have."

Lily's hand groped about in the glass show-case, procured a box, and withdrew to reach for wrapping-paper.

"Is that the best?" questioned the girl shyly.

"It's used a good deal."

"I wanted," explained the girl, "something very nice, whippy creamy like, that tastes good and removes tartar and leaves a clean feeling."

Lily's hand, reaching for the twine-ball, hesitated.

"I don't know as we've got anything like that—"

"Well," apologized the girl, "never mind. Have you some nice perfume?"

"Wha' kind?" Lily replaced the tooth-paste safely within the show-case. Her voice and her manner implied complete exhaustion.

"I—hardly know. Could you suggest something?"

Lily removed a stopper from a bottle and waved it back and forth beneath her own nose.

"This is used a good deal," she sighed.

"I imagine it may be very nice," said the girl. "Now, if you please, I'd like to see the proprietor."

"Wha' k—" began Lily, and checked herself, but not in time.

"I should prefer," answered the girl, and every particle of shyness was gone from her voice, which snapped briskly, "a pleasant proprietor, but if you haven't one, I'll take the best you have."

It was a Lily divested of languor, blue eyes blazing, and pale cheeks flaming, who appeared in the doorway and announced:

"A party out here wants to see you"; adding, far from inaudibly, "she thinks she's goin' to start something."

"Homely as a little hen and as attractive as the very dickens," was what Ward thought, when he met the girl's brown eyes.

"How do you do?" was what he said, making it interrogative.

"You are the proprietor?"

"Guilty," he pleaded, and smiled at her.

He had an agreeable smile; it was slow in coming and long in staying, and it revealed white and even upper teeth.

"Then do you know that if one wanted to get anything out of this store of yours one would have to steal it?"

Ward continued his smile, and began to inspect the little brown freckles that peppered her little brown nose. "If a woman wants to talk, let her," was one of his few rules of business.

"And to do that," continued the girl, "one

need not murder a clerk, either. Here"—from a pocket of her mannish coat she took a bar of soap and two spools of dental floss—"I stole these just now. I rather think the young woman saw me, but she was too ladylike to mention it."

Lily, shocked into speechlessness, could produce only a gurgle of denial.

Ward, much amused, but greatly annoyed by a mental giddiness which seemed to

"Well, Miss Upshar," said Josephine, "this conversation may interest you a bit, but since the rest of it isn't going to be about anything that concerns you—" She paused, and pointed the meaning of her remark by a long look toward the front of the store. "Only," she added, "I



"I'LL LEAVE THIS MINUTE. I KNEW WHEN SHE CAME IN HERE THAT SHE MEANT TROUBLE."

shouldn't hang into the window, as you were doing when I came in.

Mr. Readway wants the people to look at the goods in that window, not at you."

Ward was sorry about that. Lily's flush, before she flounced away, was quite a painful one.

"And now?" he said to Josephine.

His tone wasn't exactly sharp, but it wasn't wholly pleasant, and it was trimmed with no smile.

"And now," she echoed—he couldn't be sure whether she was mocking him or not—"and now, Mr. Readway, I suppose you know that your store is about as attractive as the dinner-table, when the family begins to reach for the toothpicks and mother says

have overtaken him, received the articles and fumbled them, futilely, in his thin, well-shaped hands.

"Thank you—"

"For nothing, as yet, Mr. Readway. You are Mr. Readway, I suppose? My name is Josephine Tuttle. And yours?" She turned to Lily.

"Miss Lily Upshar," murmured Lily.

she doesn't mind washing the dishes, but she does hate the clearing up?"

The smile began, and came, and stayed.

"I know that I never could have said it—picturesquely," he approved.

The brown eyes snapped.

"Why are you in the drug business, anyway?" their owner demanded.

"There is a nice little slangy expression—ah, I have it! Search me!"

Quick little wrinkles of annoyance contracted her straight, dark brows.

"It is all very well to be funny," she said, as if it were not so at all.

"I didn't mean to be funny," Ward objected, "but I didn't know that you meant to be serious. Do you? If you do, I sha'n't in the least mind telling you why I'm in the drug business, if you'll tell me why you want to know."

"Call it feminine curiosity concerning the reasons why a man at—how old are you, thirty, thirty-one or so?—is satisfied to be a failure."

"Only," he said, and nothing but curiosity was in his voice, "how do you know about—the failure?"

She rubbed a gray suede finger over the glass show-case.

"Fly-specks—ugh!"

"All right," he agreed cheerfully. "I'm in this fly-specked pharmacy because my uncle put me here; victim of circumstance, pawn of fate, all that sort of stuff. His name is Benjamin T. Ward, and he had this place for years. Then he invented—manufactured—concocted—what is the word, anyway?—some nice white pills that were absolutely harmless, couldn't hurt any one who took 'em, so he made his fortune out of them. My mother was his sister. We lived with him, father having died when I was a youngster. When mother died, she willed me to Uncle Benjamin; but he didn't want me. I was at the pliable, plastic age, and didn't have a cent of my own. He sent me to school and rushed me through a pharmaceutical course; then took this cast-off place of his, put me in it, and said: 'Take it and keep it; you may have it, but don't bother me again.' He went to Bermuda and I—took it. It was all I knew. You see," he added, as if giving a comprehensive summary and complete explanation, "I like to write free verse."

She disregarded the addition.

"And you've been here ever since?"

"Yes. That is, I—enlisted of course.

Wanted to be a flier. Just before I was to be sent over, the airplane I was in crashed and so did I. Took for everlasting to get me mended. Fact, the war was over before I was ready to go to it."

Try as he might, he had not been able to keep the regret and the wistfulness out of his voice.

"Too bad," she said without an atom of sympathy, "that the United States can't keep a tidy little war on hand for men like you who want to do nothing else; but it can't. And, so long as you weren't a successful aviator, why don't you try being a successful druggist?"

"I *have* let things go to seed a bit since I came back," he confessed. "The fellow I had in here started it, and then, when I came home with this busted leg—"

It was his first apology, and she pounced on it and abused it.

"Fah! You don't mix prescriptions, nor clean show-cases, nor keep accounts, nor write advertisements, with your feet, do you? But I'll tell you what some people do with their feet, if they get a chance—they keep them placidly waiting to slip into dead people's shoes!"

II

WARD flushed. Her accusation was faintly flavored with truth. He had not waited for his uncle's money. He had never allowed himself to hope for it; but occasionally dreams had come, back there in the stuffy prescription-room—dreams of yachts, and a flying-machine of his own, and—

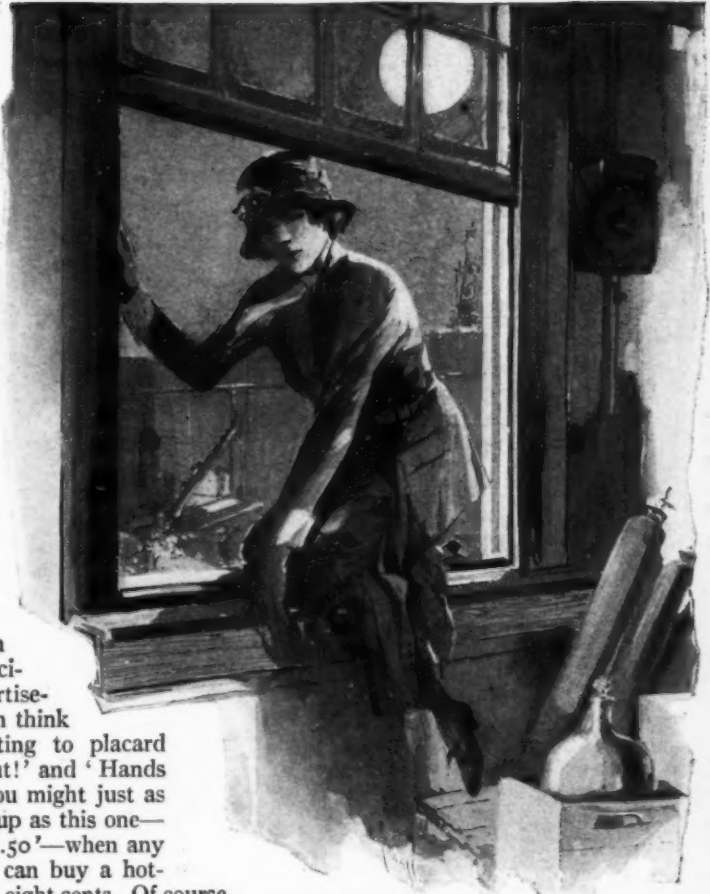
"You haven't," she interrupted his thoughts, "answered my question as to why you don't try to be a successful druggist; so I'll answer it for you. You don't know how to be one. And, since you are beginning to get rather tired of me, I'll come to my point. I'm to be here in Grove City for a while. The reason doesn't matter, but we'll say that there has been so much murder and bloodshed about here lately"—Ward grinned; somnolent, sober-minded Grove City!—"that the government has sent me to investigate. After inspecting the place, I have reached the conclusion that such an investigation won't take all of my time. Now—get this straight—I am not looking for a job. I never need to go about looking for one. But once in a while I find a big, lonesome job that is looking for me; that needs me; that begs me to come and take it. And then I do. I've

found such a job right here, to-day, in the Readway Pharmacy."

"Are you"—Ward had a dizzy feeling, just as on the day of his accident, that things were going too fast for him, were getting away from him—"are you a pharmacist?"

"No," answered Josephine, directing her brown eyes straight into his gray ones, "no, neither pharmacist nor fool. I'm not an artist, but I can fix a window display that doesn't look as if something had been spilled there by accident. I'm not an advertisement writer, but I can think of things more inviting to placard about than 'Keep Out!' and 'Hands Off!' Yes, indeed, you might just as well have those signs up as this one—'Hot-water bottles, \$2.50'—when any one knows that they can buy a hot-water bottle for ninety-eight cents. Of course they are not as good, but advertise the ninety-eight-cent ones, and sell the two-and-a-half ones—if you can. I'm not a ratter, either, but I think I could manage to keep them from getting in the chamois-skins as they have into those." She kicked the toe of a shining black Oxford against a lower corner of the show-case. "Either you or little white Lily must have left the door open some night. Rats love chamois. I'll wager you haven't cleaned out your basement for months, and that it is fuller of them than the trenches." She wrinkled her nose. "I can almost smell 'em; excelsior and trash and rats, and you probably wondered why your insurance rates were raised. And—mercy!" She broke off, with a perfectly feigned expression of alarm. "Here comes a customer. Run and hide quickly, as you did when I came in!"

Ward tried to smile, but the attempt was something of a failure because of a hateful



"I DIDN'T NEED THE KEY. I GOT IN VERY EASILY THROUGH THE BACK WINDOW"

consciousness that he was blushing like a schoolgirl.

And of course the customer had to be Bobby Wilcott with a bottle of sweet spirits of niter which mama said didn't have any taste or smell to it, so she guessed it was spoiled. And would Mr. Readway please give him back his money?

Outwardly Ward was entirely pleasant. Inwardly he swore a round, red oath. He would have given his best published poem to have had that not happen right then.

"It does have to be kept cool and dark," was all that Josephine said when Bobby had gone; and there was a bit of understanding sympathy in her voice, and not a bit of reproach as she said it.

"I'd have to have a refrigerator instead of a store if I kept everything cool in this town in July."

"Yes, I know it is hard," she agreed. "And now, Mr. Readway"—it seemed to Ward that much of the snap had gone from her—"what about this job that needs me so badly?"

"I'm afraid," he answered, "that, much as the job may need you, it can't afford you. This store scarcely permits one clerk. I've often thought lately of letting Lily go and attending to it all myself."

"You don't need to tell me about the business. I've been here almost an hour. As for the job affording me—what were your profits last month? Please don't tell me that you don't know."

Ward did not know, but he was a good guesser.

"I think the—er—net profit was about ninety dollars."

"Whew!" she whistled. "And only two other drug-stores in a town of ten thousand people! That's worse than I had imagined. But—suppose I come in here and make the profits for this month, starting to-morrow, amount to one hundred and eighty dollars; should I be entitled to half of the added profit, or forty-five dollars?"

"I should say so, certainly."

"And would I get it?"

"You mean?"

"I mean, would you pay half of the added profit to me?"

"Why"—Ward stepped neatly into the net—"why, yes, of course."

"Then," and Josephine began to unbutton her coat, "I'm hired. Will you show me where I may hang my coat and hat?"

Ward, not because he wanted to, but because he was giddy by this time and could think of nothing else to do, led the way into the back room. There Josephine hung her coat on a chair.

"I'll bring a hanger to-morrow," she explained. "Hooks are deadly to the set of a coat."

Ward looked at her admiringly. Her crisp white blouse was as guiltless of wrinkles as if it had never been covered by a coat. She removed her hat. Her crisp brown hair was guiltless of crinkles, and instead of fluffing it out she looked into the mirror and patted it down. Then she produced a powder-pad and powdered her nose. Perhaps it was this proof of femininity which gave Ward courage to voice a final protest:

"See here, Miss Tuttle, I know you aren't a forty-five-dollar-a-month girl, es-

pecially not when the forty-five is as doubtful as the dickens. An efficiency expert—"

"Don't call me one," she warned, "for in a minute you'll have to change your mind and call me a charwoman." As she spoke she removed the links from her cuffs and rolled up her sleeves. "Now, if you are really unhappy about that forty-five dollars, just follow me in a simple problem of mental arithmetic. There are ten thousand people in this town. We are, this first month, going to get one cent a day from each one of those people. Oh, I know that a great many of them never enter a pharmacy, but when Johnny comes in for ten cents' worth of licorice-drops there are ten of 'em. We'll figure thirty-three per cent gross profit—too low, but I'm going easy. We'll figure twenty-five per cent costs—too high, but it may run that for a month or so. That leaves eight per cent net profit, or eight dollars a day. Eight times thirty-one days is two hundred and forty-eight dollars, and that, minus the ninety dollars, leaves one hundred and fifty-eight dollars. Half of that is seventy-nine dollars that I'll have this month. Next month we'll get two or three cents from each person, and by Christmas at least ten cents. That would make my December salary come to about seven hundred and ninety—"

"There was once a man," Ward interposed, "who bought some chickens—"

"I know him," she flashed. "He was the same man who said at the end of a year that there was plenty of money in chickens, but no one had ever got it out."

"The same," smiled Ward.

"If you'll put some water on to heat"—she almost but not quite returned his smile—"I'll begin, in about ten minutes, on the getting of it out."

"Isn't it rather late to begin now, this afternoon?" objected Ward as he lit the gas.

"You keep open in the evening, don't you?"

"Not this week. Mr. Young, Mr. Curren—the other Grove City druggists—and I have an arrangement whereby we alternate the weeks for keeping our stores open in the evenings."

"Why! How very cozy and friendly! But why limit it to the evenings? Why not extend your arrangement to the daytime as well?"

It seemed to Ward that her very footsteps clicked sarcastically as she walked to the

front of the store. There she paused, folded her arms, and looked about her.

"Um-m!" she meditated, as her brown eyes darted here and there and back again. "Um-m!"

Then she unfolded her arms and walked briskly toward Lily.

"Miss Upshar," she began, pleasantly enough, and not at all snappishly, "as we don't seem to be very busy just now, what do you say to some tidying up? I'm sure you are a good housekeeper, so if you take those bottles up there and scrape those dirty labels off and wash them, while I begin on the soda-fountain—"

"Me!" said Lily; and the one word ran the scale of incredulity, anger, and disdain.

"Oh, no," said Josephine, still pleasantly. "I didn't ask you to black Mr. Readway's boots. I suggested that you might wash some bottles."

Lily turned to that confusedly amused man.

"Do I have to take orders from her? Is she going to work here?"

"Yes," Josephine answered in meaningful italics. "I am going to *work* here."

"Then," said Lily, "I am not. If you think I'm going to stick around here and take orders from her and wash bottles—"

"Oh, come now, Lily," began Ward, propitiatingly, but Miss Upshar was not to be appeased.

"I won't! I'll leave this minute. I knew when she came in here that she meant trouble. If you'll take my advice, Mr. Readway, you'll not give her my key when she asks for it to-night. There's more 'n one way to skin a cat, and more 'n one way to rob a store. She's tried one—"

"Oh, see here now, Lily—" Ward expostulated.

"Acumen!" approved Josephine.

But her approval never reached Miss Upshar, who, by that time, was before the mirror pinning on a picture hat. A few minutes later she emerged and ruined the dignity of her exit from the store by slamming the door.

"I'm sorry," said Josephine, with a glance at Ward that was almost contrite.

"Perhaps," he submitted, "I might do those bottles?"

"You might," agreed Josephine; and procuring hot water, soap, and brushes, she set to work on the soda-fountain.

Between then and closing-time, an hour and a half later, she made two remarks.

"It is a pity"—her first one—"that the soda-fountain is next the door. They should have to pass the candies and cigars and cosmetics, at least, to get to it.

"I suppose, Mr. Readway"—her second remark, made as she was crowding the little hat down over her ears—"that you think you can't afford to change the location of the soda-fountain just now?"

"I'm afraid not now," Ward answered; then, proffering a key: "This is yours, Miss Tuttle."

She shook her head.

"Thank you, but I'll not need it. Little white Lily has gone, but she shouldn't be forgotten."

Ward despised himself because the faintest tinge of relief had been his at her refusal. At any rate, he wouldn't keep her waiting outside in the morning. For the first few days she would probably arrive ridiculously early. So he set his alarm-clock that night for six o'clock instead of seven; and at seven the next morning—instead of eight, as usual—he fitted his key in the lock.

As the door swung open, it bumped into, and he stumbled over, a large negro woman, who was down on her knees scrubbing the floor. Right after his muttered oath, and just before his question, Josephine appeared at the back of the store. She was wearing a white duck coat, and on her brown hair was perched a stiffly starched butterfly of a white cap.

"You see," she twinkled as he approached her, "I didn't need the key. I got in very easily through the back window. I have two Chinamen in the basement, cleaning out. They'll do it free, if you'll give them the boxés for firewood. A window-washer will be here in a minute. He'll do the mirrors and all. I couldn't," she half apologized, "do it all by myself, you know. I can't do much, either, until they get out, so I've started in on these card-indexes. This one is for daily statements, so that we can tell exactly what we've done each day; they're easy to fill out from the cash-register slips. I've made it very simple, so that when Oscar and Irmalene come they won't have any trouble filling theirs out each morning."

"Oscar and Irmalene?"

"Don't worry. They are not relatives of mine. They are the new clerks we'll soon be having. I haven't found 'em yet, but in a town like this there are always Oscars and

Irmalenes who want to work in the drug-store. Now this box of cards is for the wants—easier than keeping them in a book, and we'll force Oscar and Irmalene to use it; we'll have to force them, or they won't. And this set is for stock. I'll have all the shelf spaces numbered, and then nothing will be lost, or if it is, we won't have to play amateur earthquake to find it. And here is a list of things I wish you'd attend to—"

Limply Ward took the list.

"Tobacco-moisteners?" he read aloud, and with a question.

"Unless you are a violent member of the Antitobacco League, or whatever they call it. The cigars in there are as brittle as bones and as dry

AN ORANGE CHOCOLATE CREAM WENT INTO A STRAWBERRY FILE AND A VANILLA CREAM INTO THE ORANGE HEAP



as cotton. Tobacco should pay big here, and it is going to."

"Covered dishes for crushed fruits—four.' But I haven't—"

"Been serving crushed fruits, because there's no demand for them. Certainly not, when Young's serves them, and if people want crushed fruits they can go there and get them. And, while they are there, they buy that whatever-it-was they've been forgetting for weeks. Young's soda-fountain, I see, is half-way down the store, where it should be."

"See the printer. See the telephone company about free telephone. See the bookstore proprietor. See some little boys." Ward read these instructions and paused. "Perhaps," he suggested, "you'll tell me what I'm to do when I see these people. The little boys, for instance—"

"Oh," she explained, "I'll attend to that. I only wanted your approval."

"Well—" said Ward weakly. "Well—"

III

GIVEN, one small boy. Put him into the hands of a stranger, a woman. Let him

be soundly scolded and threatened with a spanking. Let him be thoroughly scrubbed; eyes filled with soap; teeth cleaned with some gritty substance. Clamp a bowl on his head and cut his hair with long scissors, snapping perilously close to his ears. Dress him up in his Sunday-best clothes and make him blacken his shoes until he complains that they hurt his feet. Steal his marbles and his sling-shot and his skates. Place him in the parlor, set him endless sums to do, and remind him that when they are done there is a large wood-pile outside and a



wide, empty wood-box
in the kitchen.

If your memory is sufficiently clear, or if your imagination is sufficiently active, you may be able to picture the utter misery, the bewilderment, the resentment of the small boy, under such trying circumstances. Can you? Then you may be able to realize dimly the mental processes, the bewilderment, the misery of Ward Readway during the next three weeks. And Ward had not the one consolation which the small boy might have

had—that of hating his tormentor. Try as he might, he could not quite hate Josephine.

It was not until the end of the fourth week that Ward, coming out of the prescription-room, paused in the doorway to realize suddenly that his store was a cool, lovely, and wholly desirable place; and that Josephine, over there at the desk, was the loveliest thing in it.

"You owe me," she said, coming to him and offering him a piece of paper, which he ignored, "eighty-four dollars and two cents."

"No!"

"That's right—now crab about it!"

But she was smiling and her eyes shone more brightly even than the store's glassware. "And next month," she triumphed, "you'll owe me twice that much!"

"That's right," he said. "Brag!"

But, at the end of the next month, she did no bragging. Instead, she scolded.

"It is a disgrace! Only sixty dollars' gain over last month. And it is our fault, of course. The clerks are well enough. Fay brings in the high-school trade, and Mr. Abret is fine at the fountain, and seems to catch the sporty folks; but something is all wrong, and I know what it is. So far our added profits have been made by stopping up leaks, and systematizing. It is time we started building up. We have the store now so that people like it when they come in. Did you hear that rich Mrs. Neuer raving about the wild flowers? But we have to fix the place so that they can't stay out of it. We must add a lot of side-lines—athletic goods; cameras—and advertise that we develop free of charge; it will mean another clerk, but he'll pay his own salary—we must have a bargain-table on Fridays, say, and sure-enough sales with snap to them, very often; we must get that circulating library started right off; we must—" She paused for breath, and met Ward's uncertain, unenthusiastic countenance. "Yes," she finished flatly, "we must have some money to do all this!"

"And I haven't any. That is, I have very little."

"Can't you borrow from a bank?"

"I—never have."

"Fine! Then you can. I've got your inventory in shipshape order. Take it along and get a thousand dollars for six months, and we'll be on Easy Street."

"Do you mean—right now?"

"Of course, right now."

"The thousand dollars is in the bank," he told her an hour later. "Go as far as you like."

Josephine went. And it was rather far. So far, in fact, that on a bright blue day in late October an old gentleman, who had come into Grove City on the noon train and had walked straight from the station to the store, paused outside of it and viewed its newly painted front, its window displays,

its signs, with an astonishment almost apoplectic. When he finally pushed open the door and strode in, his face, usually potato-white, was shrimp-pink in hue.

Because it was the noon hour, the store was empty, save for Ward, unpacking a shipment of patent medicines, and Josephine, piling chocolates into pyramids.

"Uncle Benjamin!" exclaimed Ward.

He came down the store with hand outstretched and a wide smile. If the tongs Josephine was using trembled a bit just then, at least she did not drop the candy.

"And more ashamed of it than I ever expected to be!" was the old gentleman's rejoinder. "So this," he continued so rapidly that Ward had no chance to insert a word, "this is what you have made out of Ward's Pharmacy! That!" He shook his cane at the bargain-counter. "That!" He shook his cane at a sign over the cash-register, which read:

Yes, we'll sell you stamps and lick 'em for you, too.

"That!"

He shook his cane at another sign in the doorway:

If you have nothing to spend but time, come in anyway, and spend it here.

"That! And that! And that!"

Again Ward attempted a word, but he was silenced by the whacking of the old man's cane on the floor.

"Ten years ago I gave you this pharmacy—a genteel business, a reputable pharmacy, with traditions of conservatism and dignity which I trusted you to uphold. I come back to find—what? A five-and-ten-cent store! A pedler's pack! With flippancy taking the place of ethics, and a bargain-table instead of sound business principles. Well, in this case, what is done can be undone, and I'll give you two days to undo it—two days, no more, to remove this truck, this trash, those baseball-bats, those signs, all of it—"

"I'll not need two days, Uncle Benjamin," Ward succeeded, at last.

An orange chocolate cream went into a strawberry pile and a vanilla cream into the orange heap.

"The sooner the better, but two days—"

"I'll not need two days," repeated Ward, "because I'm not going to take out anything, nor change the position of a bottle on a shelf."

"Then—then," the old gentleman sputtered, "let me tell you something, young man. Let me tell—"

"First let me tell you something, Mr. Ward." The cool, clear voice, coming from the other side of the store, caused both angry men to start as if a cool, clear stream of water had been turned upon them. "Let me tell you something. You were preparing to say that if Ward didn't do as you wished, he'd never get a penny of your money. Well, he doesn't want a penny of your old pill-money. At the rate he is going he will own this block in five years, be doing a big mail-order business, and be thinking about disinheriting you. You didn't think I'd stay here, when you sent me to pry into his business, with the plan that if I reported failure you wouldn't leave him a cent—because he needed it, I suppose—and if I reported success you'd leave him a fortune, because he didn't need it. You thought I'd come hurrying back to report failure, and ogle you, and let you marry me and get the money myself. I didn't do it; but your next nurse probably will. And if she doesn't, with the cotton-wool care you take of yourself, you'll probably outlive Ward. Anyway, you can't mess up his life for him by holding out hopes for fortune. He is too busy to wait for it."

Had she been a minute gnat buzzing about, Mr. Benjamin Ward could not have paid less attention to her. When she had finished speaking, he turned to Ward as if no interruption had occurred.

"You'll make no changes, then?"

"I will make no changes."

Mr. Ward walked out of the front door. Josephine walked into the back room. Ward followed her. She was putting on her coat.

"I'm fired," she said.

Ward went to her and put his hands on her shoulders.

"Jo, you hired yourself by taking off your coat, but you can't fire yourself by putting it on. Do you know why I stood up to the old boy out there? It wasn't because I didn't want his money, it was because—"

"He makes me so mad!" interrupted Josephine, speaking hurriedly, as if trying to erect a barrier. "I took care of him for six months, and he was the crankiest! He rang his bell in his sleep from force of habit, and—"

"It was because," Ward went on, "I wanted you much more. When you came

here you said that you never looked for a job; but when you found a big, lonesome job that needed you, that begged you to come and take it, you took it. Jo, do you suppose, if you tried—you might feel that way about—a husband?"

"If—he were positive—no, wait! You aren't, you can't be. You don't know me at all. You think I'm a sort of seventh wonder. I'm not. I'm—only a druggist's daughter. I've been brought up on drug-stores. I knew the price of my first nursing-bottle, and the profit on it; but I don't know much else, except nursing, and I—no, please wait!"

But Ward would not wait.

IV

THE next day the letter came.

MY DEAR NEPHEW:

Tell that little pepper-pot that she was mistaken. I did not want to marry her. She'd have made life too hot for me. But tell her that I like her better than any woman I know, and for that reason I have gone to no small pains to get the best of her. When she was my nurse I used to think, at times, that I never could do it. Then I caught her, twice, looking at your picture; I noticed that she read that stuff of yours which you call poetry; I noticed the way she looked when the news came that you had been injured; I noticed the fire in her eyes when I poked fun at you and ran you down; so I hit upon the plan of passing you the pepper. You needed it—I did not. Judging from what I saw yesterday, my plan was a success.

A happy honeymoon to you! Your uncle,
BENJAMIN WARD.

P. S.—Enclosed please find check. In case I should desire to marry my next nurse, I'd like to be able to do so with a clear conscience, so I'm sending this much of the old pill-money in advance. Bully for you, my boy, for calling my bluff!

Ward read the letter and passed it, without a word, to Josephine.

She read it.

"Oh!" she gasped. "That old man always did make me so mad!" But she did not look as if she were so angry. Then she read the check, and again she gasped: "Ward!" Her brows contracted, and the corners of her mouth turned down. "Ward—you'll be wanting, now, to give up the store, and—"

"I was thinking," he answered, "that when we come home from our happy honeymoon we might have a tile floor put in here, and have the soda-fountain moved, and—here, now, wait!"

But Josephine would not wait.

Safe or Out?

BY JIM EGAN

Illustrated by R. L. Lambdin

IF anything in this world makes me sorer than a sunburnt neck, it's to hear people call Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, and them guys "heroes of the diamond." Take it from me, the real hero of any baseball battle is the bird who risks his neck out there to call 'em when they're over and when they ain't.

Why, compared to what an umpire has to stand for, them Hun-hunters in the front-line pits had it *soft*! Everybody is out to rope the goat of the indicator man. When he isn't busy ducking a barrage of bottles from the bleachers, he is choking from gas attacks from the grand stand. You're as bad as a trolley-car during the rush hours—they all want to ride you.

It's tough enough in the big brush, but out in the sage it's the pure arsenic. A group of regular small-town bugs are sure the Willie Wildeyes of the national game, especially if they have a couple o' ice-cream cones hung up on the combat. Pull a bum decision on them, and somebody starts to chip out your history on a nice marble block. It's immediate friends and no flowers for you.

During the ten years I have been robbing the players of base-hits, and giving rotten decisions, and doing all those other things that umpires usually do, I tried to steer clear of the sticks. That's why I turned the deaf and unheeding ear when my old friend Mickey Reilly attempted to get me to referee a conflict in one of them rutabaga centers.

"There's a hundred dollars for you," he says.

"A fine funeral I could get for a hundred bucks!" I says. "Why not make it enough to bury me decent, anyhow?"

"Aw, lay off that noise! I ain't asking you to come out to any hick village. Sterling is a real town—a manufacturing town—an industrial center. This is the big game

of the season; every fan for miles will be there, and—"

"And the umpire will be just as popular as the Kaiser at the peace conference!" I says. "I know all about that local-talent stuff. I went out to wave them back to the bench in a jay series one year, and I happened to call a guy out because he didn't swing at the third strike. The only reason I escaped with my life was because they had to stop to buy a new rope. Never again! It's the bunk, take it from me!"

But Mickey argued with me a long time, and I finally gave in. Anyway, he and I were old friends; we had muffed flies together on the Cincy Reds and cheated the same bushers out o' their back teeth at poker. Besides, a hundred bucks is a hundred bucks, after all.

It seemed that the Thorpe Mills team—which Mickey managed—had cleaned up everything in Raven County but the Verrill Cannery outfit. Both teams were good, Mickey said, and they were gonna play it off in Sterling, the county-seat.

"Well, I'll accept," I says, "but I'm taking more chances than the hero of a movie serial."

"Aw, forget it!" says Mickey. "You're going to a civilized burg."

"It don't take much to make civilized people savage at a ball-game," I tells him. "But I never had any brains, anyhow. I'll go. What kind o' club have you got, Mickey?"

"Good!" he says. "I have a professional battery, but all the other boys work in the mills except my field captain, Joe Kenny. Remember Joe?"

"Foxy Joe?" I says. "Well, I guess! That bird is trickier than one of them openers on a sardine-can. I know him—old Foxy Joe!"

"Always on his toes," chuckles Mickey. "Gotta keep your eyes open, or he'll get

you. The old scoundrel has been a big help to me."

"Who handles the cannery gang?" I next asks. "Are they any good?"

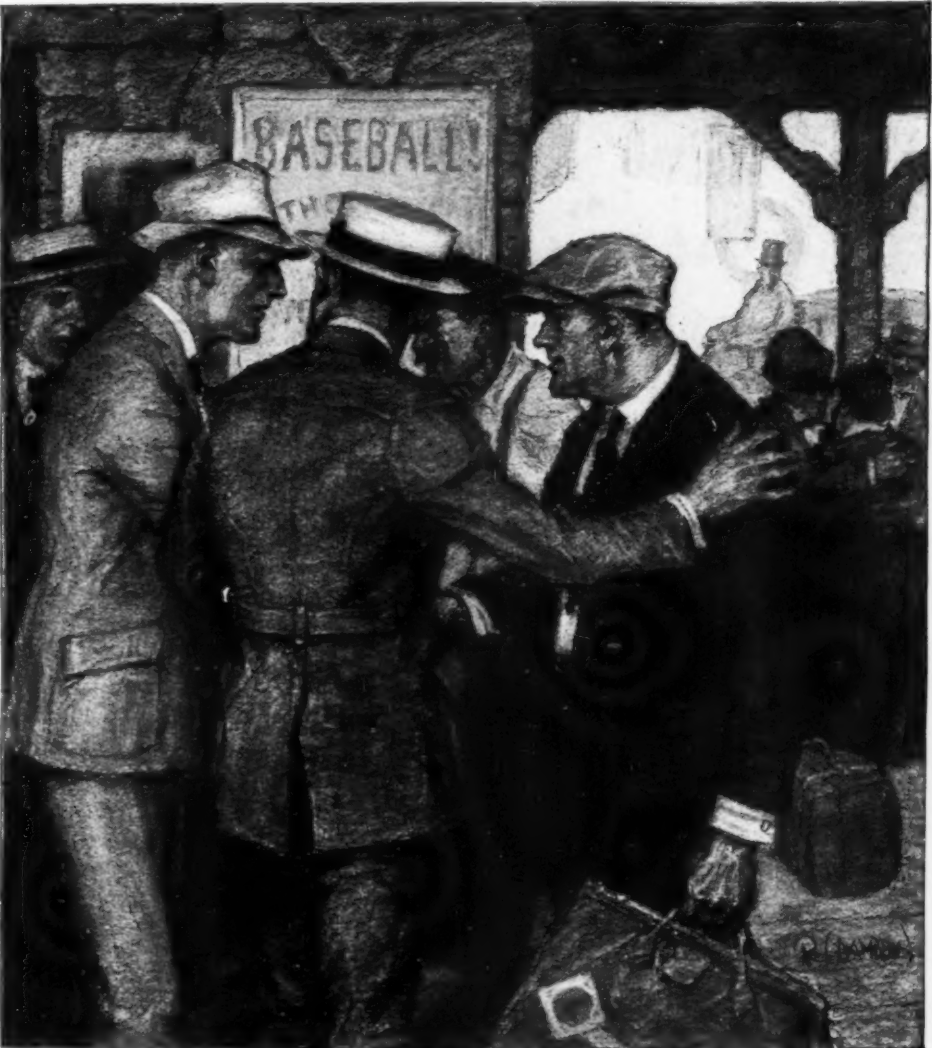
"Nice ball club," Reilly admits. "Several college ginks in the line-up, and the rah-rah boys are snappy. Got a pitcher who's a bear. Their captain is a pleasant young fellow from the University of Oregon. Kind o' sweet on old Verrill's kid. He's sure anxious to beat us, too!"

I absorbed a lot more local color from Mickey, and then held him up for some

expense money. The game was to be played Saturday afternoon. I would leave for Sterling Thursday morning and arrive there Friday afternoon.

I got there all right, tired and dirty. It was a day-coach ride all the way, and enough to make any goof forget his early Christian training.

When I ambled off the jerkwater at Sterling, which appeared to be populated around the ten-thousand mark, Mickey Reilly and a good-looking youth were there to hand me greetings and salutations.



"MR. McLAUGHLIN, MEET MR. HASKELL, CAPTAIN OF THE VERRILL CANNERY CLUB,"
SAYS MICKEY, DOING THE ETIQUETTE STUFF

"Mr. McLaughlin, meet Mr. Haskell, captain of the Verrill Cannery Club," says Mickey, doing the etiquette stuff.

"Glad to know you, McLaughlin," says Haskell, giving me the lunch-hook squeeze. "I feel that we are fortunate in getting a man of your ability to umpire our little battle."

"Well, I'm just like this Nathan Hale guy," I says. "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country."

"Oh, it won't be as bad as that!" laughs the cannery captain. "The fans will have their war-paint on to-morrow, but I guess an old campaigner like yourself will get by. And now I know Mr. Reilly wants to take you over to the hotel. But, after you've washed up a bit, I have been requested to invite you up to the Verrill place for dinner. I can't be there, but Mr. Verrill and his daughter will entertain you in good style."

I looked at Mickey Reilly.

"Hop to it," he says. "Only tell old Verrill not to try to bribe this bird, Haskell. He's high-priced and hard-boiled."

So I went over to the Central Hotel—I coulda guessed the name before I hit the town—and dolled up a bit. About six bells I blew out to the cannery magnate's domicile, and found it to be something of a shack.

Old Verrill seemed to be a pretty harmless guy, and as for his daughter Millicent—well, I'll say that if I had been single and a few years younger I'd been hanging around her house like ivy. She sure was a cute little bundle of sugar. If this Haskell guy had staked a claim to her, he was the luckiest stiff in the world, I thought.

They threw me a line of home-cooked eats that were knock-'em-dead, and I went after 'em like a starving Belgian. Of course, most of the chatter was about baseball, and I learned that Miss Millicent was no dub when it come to spilling that stuff.

The old man was all heated about the coming game. I saw that it didn't mean any more to him than his right eye. It seemed that he and Mr. Thorpe, the mill man, loved each other like a Bolshevik loves water, and the winning of that game certainly meant something to the Verrill household. The way the old boy raved, I pitied young Haskell if the cannery lost.

After the banquet this Millicent lady asked me if I didn't want to take a stroll about the hacienda and give their gardens the east and west.

The Verrills had some plantation, and I slipped the girl a few kind words about it. She took the remarks a bit careless.

"Oh, Mr. McLaughlin," she says sudden like, "do you think the cannery will win to-morrow?"

"Search me!" I says. "I never seen either team play. I haven't any idea."

"I do hope the cannery wins! It means so much to Perry—to Mr. Haskell. And to me!"

"Why?" I asks, stupid.

"Because—because Perry and I want to be married, and I am afraid if the cannery loses papa will be so mad he—he won't let us. He is just crazy over the old game."

"Why give me this earful?" I says, suspicious.

"Oh, I don't know—only you are the umpire, and I thought—I mean, you wouldn't want to see our happiness spoiled, would you, Mr. McLaughlin? And maybe you could help our side just a little tiny bit, if we needed it."

All in white, she looked up at me, her eyes blue and shining, sweetly begging me. She was such a pretty little thing!

"Did Haskell tell you to do this?" I says.

"No!" she shakes her head. "He would be awful angry if he knew, I guess."

"My dear girl," I tells her, soft and gentle, "if you was a man, and made them cracks to me, I—well, I better not tell you what I'd do. I realize you are probably a lot in love with Mr. Haskell, and a guy's got to excuse a woman in love for a lot o' things. But I umpire games only one way, girly. I call 'em as I see 'em. If I give a bad decision, it's accidental, not on purpose. I ain't winning games for nobody. That ain't my business. And you wouldn't want to see the cannery win by cheating. I know Haskell wouldn't. Don't you see that's right?"

She looked at me, and her little mouth began to quiver. Next thing I knew she was crying like sixty.

"Please—please forgive me!" she sobs. "I didn't mean to do wrong. It's just because I love Perry. Oh dear!"

Well, it was a nervy trick for me to do, but I took her in my arms like a little kid for a minute or two, and somehow I calmed her down.

"It's all right, little lady," I says. "Probably the cannery won't have no trouble winning, anyhow."

And with a few more such consoling remarks I beat it. Not that I figured the cannery would have the easy work I pretended; I had played ball too long with Mickey Reilly.

II

It was Mickey who dug me out of the hay Saturday morning.

"Got another bid for you," he says. "Mr. Cranford Thorpe, the guy who pays our bills and runs the mills, wants you to lunch with him."

"Gee!" I says, sarcastic. "I'm a riot in this burg, ain't I? Just as popular as a new almanac. What's the idea of all this social honor? This is the first time I ever heard of anybody getting friendly with an umpire. Maybe they are like the cannibals—fattening me up before the big feast."

"Gonna accept or not?" asks Mickey.

"Why not?" I says. "A meal is a meal any time. Gonna be with us, I suppose?"

"No. Thorpe says he wants to eat with you alone. He's very anxious for you to come. I'll take you over for the knockdown."

It was a swell day for baseball—clear and bright, and yet not too warm. It was the kind of weather that brings the bugs out in bunches like bananas.

Cranford Thorpe, the mill man, was a big, burly guy who looked like what a heavy-



"MY DEAR GIRL," I TELLS HER, SOFT AND GENTLE, "IF YOU WAS A MAN AND MADE THEM CRACKS TO ME, I—WELL, I BETTER NOT TELL YOU WHAT I'D DO"

weight champ ought to look like. He stowed me into his buzz-wagon and whizzed away out to his country home.

A nice little lunch had been set up for us, and I began to crowd the plate like a high-school hitter.

"Understand Verrill had you out to dinner last night?" Thorpe finally says.

"Yeh," I answers, careless.

"How much did he offer you?" comes next.

"How much what?" I demands, fumbling the grilled lamb.

"Dough—coin! I know the old geezer is crazy to win this game, and I figured the first thing he would try to do would be to buy off the umpire. But I'll raise his figure, whatever it is."

I shoved myself away from the lunch.

"You may be leading the league when it comes to the mill business, Thorpe," I says; "but when it comes to umpires you are running wild on the sacks. Mr. Verrill did not offer me anything last night. I don't get my jack that way. Nobody is buying my services during this ball-game, you can take it from me!"

"Everybody has a price," sneers Thorpe.

I began to get torrid under the collar.

"Another squawk like that," I tells him, "and I'll bust you one! You ain't gonna buy me, nor nobody else! That goes! Now, how can I get back to Sterling?"

Thorpe grinned at me.

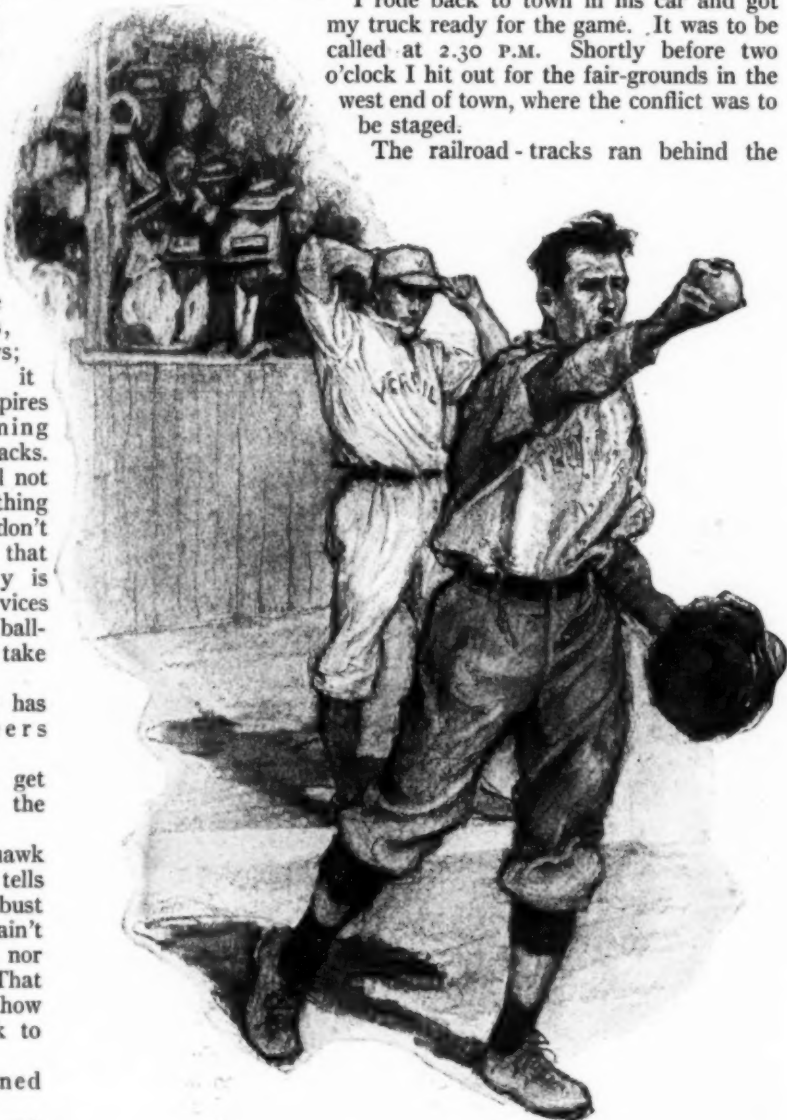
"Sit down and finish your lunch," he says. "I'll take you back to town. I'll apologize for all I said. I just wanted to make sure of you. I want to see my team get a square deal, of course—that's all."

"They'll get it as square as a German general's bean," I says, "and there's nothing so square as that."

I was pretty sore for a time, but finally cooled. I saw Thorpe had been trying to test me, and in a way I couldn't blame him. Safety first!

I rode back to town in his car and got my truck ready for the game. It was to be called at 2.30 P.M. Shortly before two o'clock I hit out for the fair-grounds in the west end of town, where the conflict was to be staged.

The railroad-tracks ran behind the



grand stand, which was a big one. The diamond was in pretty good shape, although the grass in the outfield was tall and rank, and the fence in the back old and rotting.

I gave the crowd the once-over, and it

seemed to me the whole county must be on hand. The fans were just pouring in. The box-office was swamped.

Cute little Miss Verrill and her father were already on hand, as was the husky Mr. Thorpe. Mickey Reilly's players had the field, and as soon as the old war-dog spied me he called me over for a little guff about the grounds with young Haskell of the cannery.

"I suppose you were counting on standing behind the catcher and calling 'em," says Mickey; "but as you are the only umps, maybe it would be better for you to stand back of the pitcher. The crowd is used to getting their umping that way."

"Jake with me!" I says. "I should worry where I stand."

Young Haskell was very pleasant. While he was chattering away, a hard-boiled old vet butted in on the group. Right away I recognized Foxy Joe Kenny.

"Hello, Joe!" I salutes him. "What you got up your sleeve to-day?"

"'Lo, Mac!" he answers, a bit sourly. "I guess we got enough up our sleeves to trim this cannery crowd, all right!"

"Tell us after the ninth inning," advises Haskell, giving him a nice smile.

We finally settled upon the rules and regulations, and all that remained was to wait for the time of game to roll around.

Both nines were a peppy bunch and went through their practise with lots of zip. The way they snapped at each other showed me it was gonna be a tough old struggle.

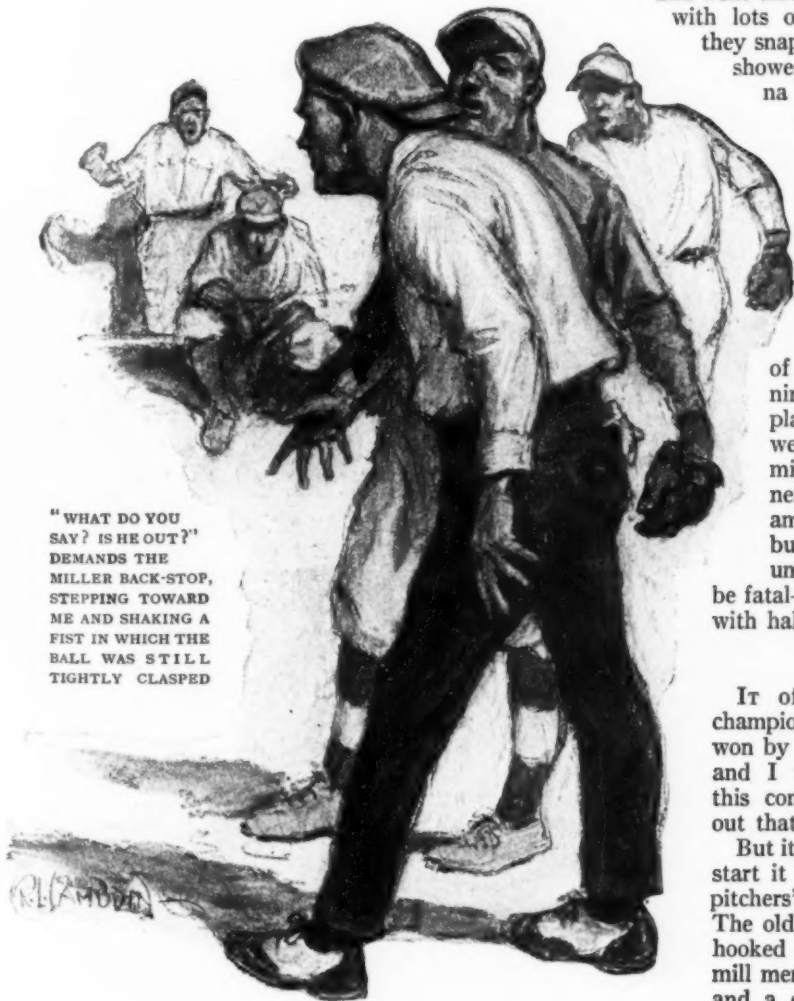
I called the combat on the dot. As I yodled out the batteries in regular big-brush style, I saw that the mob of fans were beginning to overflow the place. All of them were either for the millers or the canners. No neutrals among them! Any bum guessing by the umpire would sure be fatal—I could see that with half an eye.

III

It often proves that championship games are won by a lop-sided score, and I was hoping that this contest might work out that way.

But it didn't. From the start it was one of those pitchers'-battle things. The old professional who hooked 'em over for the mill men was a southpaw and a crafty bird. His

"WHAT DO YOU SAY? IS HE OUT?" DEMANDS THE MILLER BACK-STOP, STEPPING TOWARD ME AND SHAKING A FIST IN WHICH THE BALL WAS STILL TIGHTLY CLASPED



catcher was an old head, and the pair worked well together.

The young right-hander who worked for the cannery took my eye, though. He had oodles of stuff, and he carried a lot o' reserve behind his eyebrows. If he got the breaks, things looked bright for the cannery boys. Haskell was back-stopping for him, and held up his end in good shape, too.

I got along well with the crowd until the third inning, when I called out a crabby miller on a third strike that he looked at. He made a bellow, but I had no further time for him. It set the crowd onto me, however.

"Rotten! Rotten!"

"Oh, you cheese!"

"So this is the league umpire!"

"Gonna rob the bank before you go back?"

"Why don't you get a pair of glasses?"

"Give the poor man a cane and a cup—help the blind!"

They ragged me for keeps, but as long as they confined their disapproval to noise I didn't worry. I was sort o' accustomed to that.

Luckily, I had no real close decisions to pull. Inning after inning the game rolled on. There were a few clean blows, fine bits of fielding, and fast double-plays that brought the crowd to its feet. Both hurlers were tighter than an Edinburgh banker in the pinches.

When the ninth stanza commenced, each team had eight goose-eggs on the board. The millers went out in order in their half, two of them breezing. The cannery took their turn. Two guys popped out, and young Haskell came to bat.

The cannery captain was a dangerous hitter—he swung a mean club, and Mickey Reilly's boxman knew it.

"Come on, Slats—whiff 'em!" I heard my old pal holler from the bench. "He's your meat—chew him up!"

Slats tried hard, and Haskell fouled three of his fork-handed flings out o' the lot. I didn't have a pill left to hand the mills pitcher. Just then the first ball fouled, which had gone over the grand stand, came in. I grabbed it on the bounce, noticing as I did so a streak of b'ack grease across it—doubtless from hitting against the railroad-track. I placed it in my pocket, as Mickey tossed out a new ball at this moment.

Haskell also fouled this one over the grand stand, and I had to give the pitcher

the reserve ball in my pocket. The old southpaw burned it over fast. Haskell took a savage cut and clicked the agate right on the nose. His hit was a drive that bounded out into the deep grass near the left wall and disappeared from sight.

The cannery captain tore around first base, then second. As he legged it into third, I saw that the left-fielder—old Joe Kenny—had the ball and was going to whip it in. Haskell did not pause, however, but kept right on for the plate. Kenny had thrown to the short-stop, who relayed it in to the Thorpe Mills catcher. The pill arrived at the plate just as Haskell slid in, stirring up a fine, large cloud of dust. The crowd was roaring and raving.

"Safe! Safe!" shrieks the cannery bugs.

"He's out! He's out!" thunders the mills rooters.

"What is it, umpire? What is it?" yells the players.

"He got him, Mac; he got him!" I hear Mickey Reilly cry.

I didn't say a word. I couldn't. The decision was very, very close—so close that I was tongue-tied. Whether the catcher had received the ball in time to tag the runner or not had been hidden from my eyes by the dust, even though I was close to the plate. Haskell might be safe—or he might be out. *I didn't know!*

Never in all my experience had anything like this happened to me. Any one can see the fix I was in. The game hung on my decision, and this game meant a lot to these people. I'll admit I was afraid of what some of the wild-eyed ones might do.

"Well, what do you say? Is he out?" demands the miller back-stop, stepping toward me and shaking a fist in which the ball was still tightly clasped.

A sudden something flashed in my head as I lamped that ball he held. I wrenched it from his grasp. It was almost new, and had no mark of any kind upon it. The ball I had given the pitcher had been streaked with grease.

This was not the pellet that Haskell had swatted!

Foxy Joe Kenny was now in the group around me, crabbing loudly.

"What are you stalling for?" he wants to know.

"Where is the ball that Haskell hit?" I demands.

"In your hand, of course," he says, flashing me a funny look.

"Cut it!" I says, getting sore. "You can't bluff me, Foxy Joe. The ball he hit was streaked with grease, and this is not marked. It isn't the same pill. You know it, Kenny!"

"By golly, I believe—" begins the south-paw heaver of the millers, when Foxy Joe cuts in:

"How do you get that way? Whatta you trying to hand us? The guy is out!"

"Sure he's out!" gargles the catcher. "I had him a mile. I put the ball on him, and he knows it!"

"This is not the ball Haskell hit, I tell you!" I says. "That ball was marked with grease, and this—"

"Aw, bring back your brain from the Berkshires!" jeers Foxy Joe. "It's on a vacation. Not the same ball? Say, do you think I'm this bird Houdini? I can't make baseballs out of nothing!"

By this time the bugs were howling blue, yellow, and green murder, and were beginning to swarm down on the field. It looked like somebody would soon have an unrivaled opportunity of collecting my life insurance, but I wasn't going to let Foxy Joe Kenny get by with his stuff.

"We'll give that outfield the once-over," I says, "and see how many balls are hidden away in that long grass."

"Oh, that's it, eh?" remarks young Mr. Haskell, shaking loose from some dust.

Through the mob comes Mickey Reilly, his Irish up and batting three hundred.

"What did you call that?" he barks.

"Haskell is safe!" I says. "That gives the game to the cannery. It's all over. Clear the diamond! Kenny, you might as well come through."

"I guess he's got you!" says Mickey, who was always pretty much of a square shooter.

So I had. Foxy Joe had tried an old gag which the long grass of the outer gardens made possible. He had salted several

balls there for emergency use. Haskell's long drive had rolled out of the lot through one of the holes in the rotten fence. Kenny had thereupon pegged in one of his hidden agates, but the bit of grease had spilled the beans.

Maybe you think that wasn't a wild mob. The cannery raised the roof with glee, while the millers came near tearing up the grand stand. They used to tell me in Sunday-school that right was might, but believe me, no matter how right I was, I felt I was hardly a popular guy in Sterling.

Among the champing herd I saw old Cranford Thorpe and the veteran Verrill. Thorpe didn't seem to know whether he was peeved or paralyzed. Verrill looked like he might want to shake hands, but didn't have the nerve.

"Oh, Mr. McLaughlin!" comes a voice, and I saw Milly Verrill breaking through, followed by Mr. Hero Haskell; but I wasn't inclined to be social, and bright, girlish eyes held no charms for me at that moment. Somewhere in the distance I could hear a train whistling.

I managed to grab Mickey Reilly on the run, and says to him:

"Mickey, for the sake of old times and the love you once bore me, get me my jack so I can hop that old rattler!"

"Beating it, huh?" he says. "Well, I don't blame you. That was some decision you pulled. If it hadn't been for that grease spot there wouldn't have been a grease spot left of you!"

The whistle tooted again. The train was closer to Sterling. I grabbed a roll of green Mickey pulled from his shirt.

"Good-by!" I squawks. "I'm leaving town now, pronto and immediate."

And, old as I am, the merry gazels had nothing on me as I loped for that railroad station. The next time I umpire a ball-game it's gonna be in Russia or some other peaceful place. Safety first for me!

THE KISS SHE DID NOT GIVE

THE kiss she did not give—it should not harm him,
Since from his selfish ways she could not charm him.
So near, so dear—her kiss, it would alarm him
Did he but know!

The kiss he did not give—it comes to haunt her,
Out of the wilderness and waste to taunt her
With scorching thoughts that say he did not want her
Who loved him so!

L. W. Ingalls

Brokers in Adventure^{*}

A ROMANCE OF LIGHTEST FIFTH AVENUE AND DARKEST AFRICA

By George Agnew Chamberlain

Author of "Home," "Taxi," "White Man," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

CHARLES HARLOW, an ex-athlete who has grown fat and flabby in the pursuit of mammon, is visited one day by an old college chum, Flange Rordon, who, thanks to an outdoor life in the wild places of the earth, is still athletic and vigorous, despite his thirty odd years. Rordon reproaches Harlow for becoming a sordid money-grubber, and by way of emphasizing his statement that Harlow is no longer a real man, but only a soft ball of putty, proceeds to "wipe up the floor" with him.

Having demonstrated to Harlow that he needs conditioning more than he needs money, Rordon collects a coterie of old friends, and that night they have a reunion at the Aspic roof-garden.

In the midst of their frolic an aristocratic, wealthy, and extremely good-looking cousin of Harlow's, Miss Helen Pelter Hume, is attracted by Rordon's good spirits and cave-mannish appearance, and asks to be permitted to join the party. Harlow tells her the party is a stag one, but Rordon says: "Aw, let the kid sit down, Charlie!" and the girl joins the celebrators.

The party becoming more and more unconventional, a free fight finally results, from which Rordon, after decimating the ranks of the flunky cohorts, escapes with Harlow and Miss Hume in a taxi. Having overheard the men discussing a projected trip to Africa in search of big game, the girl vows she will go with them, and refuses to alight at her home. Rordon and Harlow acquiesce for the time being and engage a suite for her at their hotel, but succeed, next morning, in slipping away from America without her.

In London they learn, however, that they are shadowed, and that Miss Hume, in her spoiled, self-willed way, is still resolved to accompany them to Africa. After outfitting themselves for the pursuit of big game, they board a German steamer for the east coast of Africa, and are congratulating themselves upon their escape when Miss Hume astonishes them by appearing on deck.

The men land at Beira, get their outfit through the custom-house, bribe various officials to delay the clearing of Miss Hume's baggage, and lie low to see what happens to her. In despair because she cannot get anything done, Miss Hume throws herself on the beach and weeps, her indomitable spirit broken at last. Rordon, relenting, takes her in his arms and agrees to let her accompany the expedition, provided she will "cut out the love stuff." He ruthlessly scales down her outfit, orders her to dress in a suitable way, and, with a full retinue of native attendants, the expedition begins its march into the interior of Africa.

Miss Hume finds that big-game-hunting is indeed no pink tea-party, but she sticks despite her numerous woes, and the caravan progresses some distance with varying luck.

Charlie Harlow, who is now in splendid physical condition, resolves one day to have revenge upon Rordon for the beating inflicted upon him in his New York office, and challenges the latter to combat. They have agreed that Queensberry rules shall govern, and are preparing for the encounter when Miss Hume inquires:

"Here! What are you silly men doing?"

Rordon issues a command in dialect, two grinning natives pinion the girl, and then, forgetting her and her protests, the white men, having chosen their fighting-ground, advance upon each other as cautiously as cats.

XI

ALONG, tense second of pause ensued; then came the whirlwind. There are moments when men in the pink of condition fight because they love it, when they feel that nothing, not even the thunderbolt of Jove himself, sent by express, can fell them. Such moments give birth to

the lust of battle in its highest and loveliest form. Such a moment had befallen Messrs. Harlow and Rordon.

Before thirty seconds had passed, Mr. Rordon's right eye was giving a horribly comical imitation of a puff-adder, while Mr. Harlow's nose, turned into a gushing fountain of incredibly red blood, was threatening to eclipse his entire countenance. Over

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the faces of the natives spread a look of ineffable joy, and over that of the imprisoned Miss Hume a glaze of horror.

"Charlie!" she gulped. "Oh, *Flange!*"

Unconsciously she was marking hits.

Mr. Rordon, having tested out every spot on Mr. Harlow's head and found an apparently uniform concrete reenforcement, began to devote his attention to body blows. Where he struck, healthy blue-black marks appeared over the bare, lean ribs, but no signs of blotchy puffiness. That was not all. The treatment seemed to amuse Mr. Harlow. He swelled out his chest, tightened his abdomen, and calmly lifted both forearms to a faced guard.

"Send some more of those, *Flange*," he remarked in a surprisingly even voice, "I like 'em!"

The words annoyed Mr. Rordon to such an extent that for the fraction of a single second he withdrew his attention from the fixed idea of winning the war. That infinitesimal lapse of concentration was what Mr. Harlow had been watchfully waiting for; he shot his right to his opponent's jaw. Mr. Rordon rose in air and became an integral part of a new constellation. The apotheosis was sickeningly brief. He fell from the heavens into the bushes and oblivion. Mr. Harlow rushed to his side.

Suddenly remembering the tenderness of the shins of the African race, Miss Hume used her heels to such effect that her captors let her go with one accord. She rushed to aid Mr. Harlow in what she thought was an errand of mercy and remorse, but found that gentleman kneeling with fist still doubled and counting the sum of ten.

"You beast!" she gulped, and fell upon him with fists, finger-nails, and teeth. "You have k-k-k-killed him!"

"Nine, ten," completed Mr. Harlow, warding her off with his left hand.

Mr. Rordon opened one eye and contorted his disarranged features into the brave semblance of a grin.

"Have you fixed my face to suit you, Charlie?" he asked.

Mr. Harlow also attempted to smile.

"Yes," he said happily. "I like it now. It looks great."

Mr. Rordon arose and solemnly shook hands; then, with a nod to Miss Hume and the boys, who were gore-sated for the first time in their lives, and consequently dazed with bliss, he proceeded to lead the way to camp.

Miss Hume was not only indignant; she was also worried. She felt that this outrageous feud must inevitably put an end to the trip, and she saw herself kept busy as a sort of buffer state all the way to the coast.

What was her amazement, therefore, upon beholding Messrs. Harlow and Rordon performing tender ministrations to each other within five minutes of reaching camp. Each pressed—literally—on the other the juiciest blankets of raw meat cut from the latest kill, each sponged the other's blood away, cleansed cuts, and swabbed them with iodine. When all the disgusting surgery of the prize-ring had been completed, even to the rough bandaging with torn towels, they shook hands once more, did a few steps of the snake-dance, and attempted to sing an ancient and hallowed song of reunion.

"It's no go—the song," croaked Mr. Harlow; "but, believe me, *Flange*, it sure is good to be back!"

"Back from where?" snapped Miss Hume. "You men are crazy, simply crazy and—and *revolting!*"

Mr. Harlow winked at Mr. Rordon; Mr. Rordon needed to make no effort to reply in kind. As a matter of historical fact he had been winking with both eyes for the space of forty minutes.

"Can you smoke?" asked Mr. Harlow sympathetically.

"I don't know. Can you?"

"Let's try."

They got out their pipes, and each tenderly separated the swollen lips of the other.

"*Disgusting!*" cried Miss Hume, and went supperless to bed.

An hour later, very hungry, she peeped out, to find the two love-birds feeding each other from a great basin of gruel with diminutive coffee-spoons. The sight was too much for her. She laughed until the tears came, put on her mackintosh and mosquito boots, and joined the party.

"Say, let me in on this," she gurgled. "I'm hungry, too."

Such, briefly, was the stirring event which cemented old friendship anew and elevated Mr. Harlow from a state of bondage to one of absolute equality with his ancient pal. From that day he was consulted on every move, and Miss Hume found herself relegated more and more to the status of camp-tender and meal-super-

visor. She didn't like it, but there was nobody to care whether she liked it or not. One night she cried.

The next morning she stepped out of her tent with a glint of revolt in her eye, which deepened to a steady glare when she found that the men had made an early and unceremonious start for the day's hunt. She breakfasted methodically and purposefully. Then she stuffed a few biscuits and a slab of chocolate into her shirt-pockets, as she had seen Rordon do many a time, handed her canteen to a grinningly interested Shef, picked up the small, high-powered rifle with which she had been taught to hit a tin can at fifty yards once out of ten shots, and made for the open.

Shef, still grinning, still complacently curious, followed at her heels. He was dressed in a greasy red fez, khaki shirt, and khaki shorts. His legs and feet were bare, for he had scorned to put on the puttees and boots allowed him for the bush. As he walked after Miss Hume farther and farther afield, a look of hurt wonder began to spread over his features. Had he made a mistake? Was the mem-sahib, as Rordon was wont to express a heart-splitting trek, "on her way"?

He glanced nervously over his shoulder and spoke.

"No good go plenty far, missis. We go back now."

Miss Hume paid no heed beyond slightly lengthening her stride.

"We go back now," declaimed Shef in nervous crescendo.

"Be quiet," snapped Miss Hume, "you—you despicable male!"

That was a new one on Shef, scion of a race which for generations had blithely bartered its women at three pounds of beads, a plug of tobacco, and twenty-five shillings in cash. He could not parse and give the syntax of the word "despicable," but he fully gathered its meaning from the expression with which it had been enunciated and from its context. He gloomily devoted his entire attention to avoiding thorns in his bare feet and legs.

They walked and still they walked. The sun crawled by the meridian and started slowly down the western sky. Miss Hume stopped in the sparse shade of a thorn-tree, ate her crackers and chocolate, and drank most of what was left of the water. Out of the kindness of her heart she offered Shef a dry biscuit, but he only shook his head

and muttered the word "*caia*," meaning house, home, camp.

After lunch Miss Hume found that she was tired of the open, barren country, and made for a forest somewhat to the left of center stage. They reached it, and to her surprise she found that the shade of its mighty trees was so dense as to have discouraged entangled undergrowth. She walked with the fearlessness of ignorance deep into the wood.

Her rifle was getting very heavy, and she had almost decided to transfer its burden when something happened. She heard a noise.

By a lucky fluke she was walking into the wind. She stood very still and peered down the dusky vistas of the forest. Her blood began to pound violently, so that her veins felt as if they were going to burst. The noise came again—a heavy, leisurely, plunking tread. A vast form swam into sight down an alley. It stopped. Suddenly all her rage at complacent mankind surged up within her; she forgot to be frightened in her swelling desire to "show them." She raised her rifle, imagined a tin can against the bulking distant shadow, and fired.

"*Phut!*" went the bullet.

Amazement, unbelieving amazement, passed from Shef's ears to his eyes and face.

"*Chahile!*" he gasped, and, having recovered his breath, again roared the word that greets a hit, as he rushed headlong toward the fallen game.

Miss Hume was close on his heels, so that when he suddenly halted on finding the beast still alive, she catapulted into him. He tumbled on his knees, and over his prostrate form she looked into the calm, pellucid gaze of a recumbent eland bull, gentle king and mightiest of all the antelope tribe that roam the wilds of Africa.

"Oh!" gasped Miss Hume, staring horrified into the eland's eyes, amazingly large and beautiful, incredibly calm, giving no sign of pain, bearing neither vindictiveness nor reproach.

The animal was large, as large as an ox, and from his head, still erect, rose thick, spiral horns, held so immovable that they looked like rococo pillars in some temple of the forest. His limpid gaze plunged straight into Miss Hume's heart and sank to poignant and undiscovered depths. With a strangling gulp she dropped her gun,

hurled herself forward on her knees, and threw her arms around the bull's great neck.

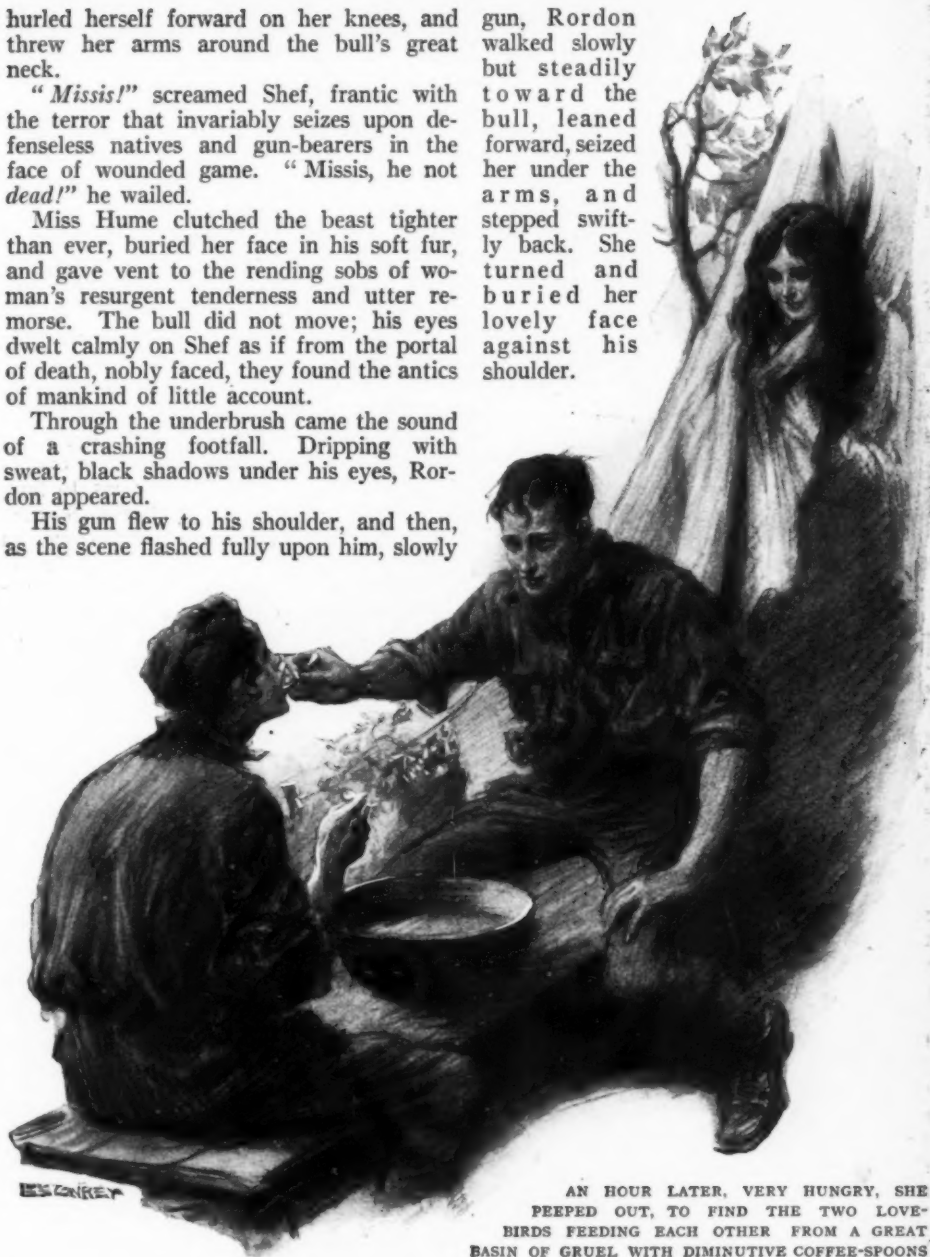
"Missis!" screamed Shef, frantic with the terror that invariably seizes upon defenseless natives and gun-bearers in the face of wounded game. "Missis, he not dead!" he wailed.

Miss Hume clutched the beast tighter than ever, buried her face in his soft fur, and gave vent to the rending sobs of woman's resurgent tenderness and utter remorse. The bull did not move; his eyes dwelt calmly on Shef as if from the portal of death, nobly faced, they found the antics of mankind of little account.

Through the underbrush came the sound of a crashing footfall. Dripping with sweat, black shadows under his eyes, Rordon appeared.

His gun flew to his shoulder, and then, as the scene flashed fully upon him, slowly

gun, Rordon walked slowly but steadily toward the bull, leaned forward, seized her under the arms, and stepped swiftly back. She turned and buried her lovely face against his shoulder.



AN HOUR LATER, VERY HUNGRY, SHE PEEPED OUT, TO FIND THE TWO LOVE-BIRDS FEEDING EACH OTHER FROM A GREAT BASIN OF GRUEL WITH DIMINUTIVE COFFEE-SPOONS

descended. A lump rose in his throat, tears to his eyes; his heart swelled with compassion, ached with a sudden pride of companionship in the unvindictive bravery of this fallen monarch of forest glades.

"Nell," he said quietly, "come here."

She did not move. Laying down his

"Oh, Flange," she sobbed, "why did I do it? Why did I?"

Rordon went back on his own pity.

"Stop crying," he said sharply, and shook her. "As a matter of fact, you've saved the day for us; the camp was on the verge of going hungry."



WITH A STRANGLING GULP SHE DROPPED HER GUN, HURLED HERSELF FORWARD ON HER KNEES, AND THREW HER ARMS AROUND THE BULL'S NECK

"No! No!" cried Miss Hume, struggling to free herself. "You sha'n't take him! You sha'n't kill him!"

"All right," said Rordon, abandoning argument; but as he led her away he murmured directions to his indunas.

"You have given me the fright of my life," he continued to Miss Hume. "By the merest chance we crossed your early-morning trail at one o'clock in the afternoon. That means we've done in just three hours what it took you seven to do."

"Really?" said Miss Hume listlessly.

Rordon turned on her angrily.

"Your abnormal ignorance prevents you from realizing that if we hadn't caught up with you before dark we might never have found you or your bones. How long do you suppose the best tracker on earth can read a foot-spoor?"

"I don't know," said Miss Hume, "and I don't care. I want to d-die!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Mr. Rordon unfeelingly. "Do you? I'd never thought of that."

Miss Hume's fighting spirit did not pick up at the rebuff, as he had thought it would.

"I'm tired of this old camp," she continued with lassitude. "You men get up and go out to kill every day, and enjoy it. You leave me alone for hours and hours, and you think you're treating me like an equal. My first and my last names are Mud."

Mr. Rordon stopped in his tracks and turned. Miss Hume had fallen two or three paces behind, and he could see that she was labo-

riously dragging one leg after the other. Her gaze was downcast, so she did not see him waiting; like some sleep-walker she stumbled into his arms. She threw up her face, perilously close to his. His glance fell upon the brook-brown pools of her eyes, fled from that danger to the faint, incredibly smooth rose tints of her cheeks, tore themselves away, tried to concentrate on a prosaic nose, found it also adorable, and finally came to rest on her quivering under lip, which was caught and held back from the contortions of weeping by resolute, pearly teeth.

"You poor kid!" murmured Mr. Rordon. "You're all in."

His arms tightened their purely supporting grip on her tired body.

"P-p-please don't p-p-pity me," quavered Miss Hume. "You know I p-p-promised not to cry—ever."

"So you did, you darling," continued Mr. Rordon in the dazed monotone of a somnambulist. "I had never noticed it before, but you are the most beautiful woman in all the world."

He would have said more had it not been for the extraordinary effect of those few words. It was as if he had held to Miss Hume's lips the golden cup of the elixir of life. The faint rose in her cheeks deepened healthily without quite bursting into flame; her lips lost the blue tinge of fatigue and turned red; her eyes, but now swimming in moisture, suddenly gleamed. Self-possession returned to her, so that she became miraculously a tower of strength. She gave the impression of a cat on the verge of purring with content—a hard simile, but a true one.

"O woman," silently cried Mr. Rordon's reawakened soul, "how clever are your defenses when you are on your guard; how pitifully weak when blundering man fortuitously touches the button that releases the spring that throws the catch that clamps the lid that bottles your eternal thirst for heart's blood!"

As has been registered, he made none of these remarks aloud; but, even as they flashed through his brain, all the keener for its recent lapse, he released Miss Hume and pushed her to a safer distance. She measured him with a cool, confident, and somewhat disdainful gaze; her long lashes fluttered.

Mr. Rordon was alarmed. Even so, he meditated, did vampires fan their victims

to semiinsensibility before planting their blood fangs in a chilled vein.

He murmured words to the effect that he had his fingers crossed, and turned to give directions to four of his followers; then he led Miss Hume to the nearest approach to shade available, and sat down. The four boys scattered over the plain, and presently returned laden with a stout pole and armfuls of the leaves of the surra palm. They sat down in a circle and began to weave a large mat with surprising dexterity. In half an hour their labor was done.

"What is it?" asked Miss Hume, but waited for no reply; the event answered her question. She arose and walked slowly toward the improvised hammock. "Will it really hold me?"

She glanced over her shoulder, and Rordon was much relieved to see that she had left off being a vampire and become a pleased child with a new toy.

"It would hold three of you," he said. "Get in slowly, for it will stretch like original sin."

He turned to his following with cluck-clucking and shouts that brought them grinning to their feet. Four boys were under the machilla, or hammock-pole; four more sprang into their wake to act as relays; the two blacks remaining and the Swahilis volunteered to carry all guns, water-bottles, and extras in general.

"Caia!" yelled Rordon. "Caia! Caia!"

He knew what he was about. The machilla-bearers started off at a terrific pace to one of the inspiring chanteys that were ringing across Africa long before the first bucko mate stopped sucking a bottle to swear. Such songs are difficult to transcribe in print, not only because it is impossible to render the astonishing staccato, but also on account of their dual nature. The leader's cry is high, and is followed abruptly by the other voices in echo and chorus.

LEADER	ECHO
<i>Hendè!</i>	<i>Hendè!</i>
<i>Hendè!</i>	<i>Hendè!</i>
CHORUS	
<i>Houng!</i>	<i>Houng! Houng!</i>
<i>Wano!</i>	<i>Wano!</i>
<i>Wano!</i>	<i>Wano!</i>
LEADER— <i>Gazumba no ende téofè, téofè, téofè!</i>	
CHORUS— <i>Ung! Ung! Ung!</i>	
LEADER	ECHO
<i>Radzol</i>	<i>Radzol</i>
<i>Radzol</i>	<i>Radzol</i>
<i>A-i-n-g!</i>	<i>A-i-n-g!</i>

Only the leader's verse varied, and it was an exceedingly lucky thing for Miss Hume that she could not understand the *leit motif*. Even the hardened Rordon, striding along at four miles an hour in his effort to keep up with the procession, turned a brick-red on more than one occasion, and refrained from protest only because he needed all the breath at his disposal for other purposes.

The blissfully ignorant Miss Hume was in a heaven of joy for the tearing spirit of the song and of wonder for the manner in which she was being wafted along. Never was there a pause, either when at a clapped signal from the head boy the pole was lifted straight in air and dropped to the other shoulder, or when the relays



"I NEVER NOTICED
IT BEFORE, BUT
YOU ARE THE
MOST BEAUTI-
FUL WOMAN
IN ALL THE
WORLD"

on rehearsal?
Say, what do
you mean by it?"
"I was tired,"
confessed Miss Hume
shamefacedly.

"Tired!" mocked
Mr. Harlow. "What
is tired, anyway?
What business—"

"Dry up, Charlie,"
said Mr. Rordon. "I
can see you've been waiting dinner for us.
You're 'way off the track, anyway. Helen
has bagged a record bull eland all on her
own, and this is merely an every-day trium-
phal procession."

At mention of her kill, Miss Hume
turned white and made silently for her tent
for a bath and a change before supper.

"Gee!" murmured Mr. Harlow.

"Don't talk about it," warned Mr. Ror-
don. "She never wants to hear that bull
mentioned again. You see, he was a
beauty, and awfully gentle. I found her

sprang in to the relief. Night fell as the
cortège swung into camp, and Miss Hume,
very much cramped but decidedly rested,
rolled out of her sagging nest.

"Well, of all the cheek!" exclaimed Mr.
Harlow, when he had persuaded himself
that both of her exquisite legs were intact.
"What do you think this is—a first-aid ex-
perimental station, or a Red Cross unit out

with her arms around his neck, and he was still very much alive. Do you get it?"

"Sure," said Mr. Harlow. "Poor girl, eh, Flange?"

Rordon nodded as he gulped down a cup of tea.

"We'll break camp to-morrow; strike out for the Zambezi and a paradise called Bandar—kudu, zebra, hartbeest, rhino, and—buffalo."

"Some shooting-ground!" commented Mr. Harlow.

After supper Rordon called a conference of captains, trackers, and guides, and long into the night continued the parley as to which was the best cross-country route to Bandar. Porters were dragged one after another from their chattering, to swell immediately with importance as they de-claimed on just how near the great river they were born and which way they would take if turned loose to go home.

Miss Hume wearied of the interminable argument, and went to bed, but Harlow stayed on. He began to take a keen legal interest in the patient deductive method by which alone information can be gathered from the African, who never has and never will answer a direct question.

In spite of the long powwow the camp was astir before the light of day, and at five in the morning Miss Hume stepped out into a cold, pearly dawn to find all struck but her tent and the breakfast-table. Eating was soon over, and then they started on their hundred-mile walk.

From the first, Rordon left to Harlow the work and the pleasure of ranging for chance game in the van of the safari. He himself stayed close to Miss Hume, as if he owed her a debt of companionship.

On the second day out they entered a vast kraal, the most populous and prosperous they had so far encountered. Here Rordon bought a miserable, ratlike pony, and out of a pillow and rope slings improvised a saddle with stirrups.

"What's that for?" asked Miss Hume suspiciously.

"For me," said Rordon calmly.

When they left the kraal, after the mid-day rest, he solemnly mounted, doubling up his knees so that his feet should not drag, and asked Miss Hume to lead the beast.

"You absurd man!" she said after half a mile. "Get down."

"Down?" asked Rordon.

"Well, off," corrected Miss Hume. "Now help me on."

He did, and adjusted the stirrups to her length of leg. Then he took the pony by the halter and hit up a faster pace than Miss Hume had ever been called upon to follow on foot.

"I see," she remarked after a while. "I had thought that you were aiming disinterestedly at my comfort, but it isn't that—you're just in a hurry."

"No," said Rordon, "you're not altogether right." He let go the pony, which continued to nose the back of the black in front, and dropped back a step, so that he walked shoulder to shoulder with Miss Hume. "Exercise is a great thing up to a certain point," he continued, "just as long as it increases the power to enjoy; but one can't afford to lose sight of the finite quality of life. By that I mean that since the span of one's years is limited, one has to balance pleasures nicely against time. Do you get me?"

"Not yet, quite," said Miss Hume.

"Well, it's this way," explained Rordon. "We are crossing wonderful country, full of sights and sounds and customs new to you. It would undoubtedly toughen you to walk the whole road, but that physical gain wouldn't measure up against the pleasure you'll get from sitting on his nibs here for a few hours a day and letting your eyes wander and your thoughts plunge deep."

"I detest people who measure each item of life," said Miss Hume.

"Of course you do," agreed Rordon promptly. "That's the woman in you. Women constitutionally despise a man who looks to consequences. Women are the original and perennial burners of bridges—plungers themselves that love plungers. But a man's title to education is depending more and more on his ability to choose quickly and exclusively the best of all that he can eat from the platter that his particular existence offers. He can't get away from that point of view without a step backward toward brute impulse."

"I would like you to define," said Miss Hume softly, "the difference between brute impulse and brute appetite. But don't," she continued. "Oh, you men! Platters! Stomachs!"

XII

THEY reached the great river and crossed into the Bandar country, where for

six days both Rordon and Harlow gave themselves up frankly to an orgy of trophy-hunting. On the seventh day a wizened old chief appeared in camp with the dawn, and proclaimed himself master of a near-by island which was the home of a band of monster buffalo. Rordon at once showed great interest, but Ibrahim, backed by his Swahili confrères, interposed.

"This island this king speak about plenty medicine," he announced gravely. "No good, master. Buffalo all *skelum*. Buffalo come, this island, people all run. No good!"

It is ever difficult for the native mind to square itself with the fact that danger and even fear are incentives to the white man, whose code demands that these disturbing factors be squarely met or forever acknowledged masters. Ibrahim's solemn warning left Rordon and Harlow no choice; there was music at hand, and they had to face it. Miss Hume also felt that to stay behind would smirch her record for courage; but on this day she found Rordon obdurate.

"Anything but buffalo," he said; "even elephant at a pinch, but to-day you stay at home."

The men made a leisurely start for the island at about seven o'clock, and, having been guided through reeds and occasionally through water to their waists to a central knoll scarred by thousands of hoof-prints,



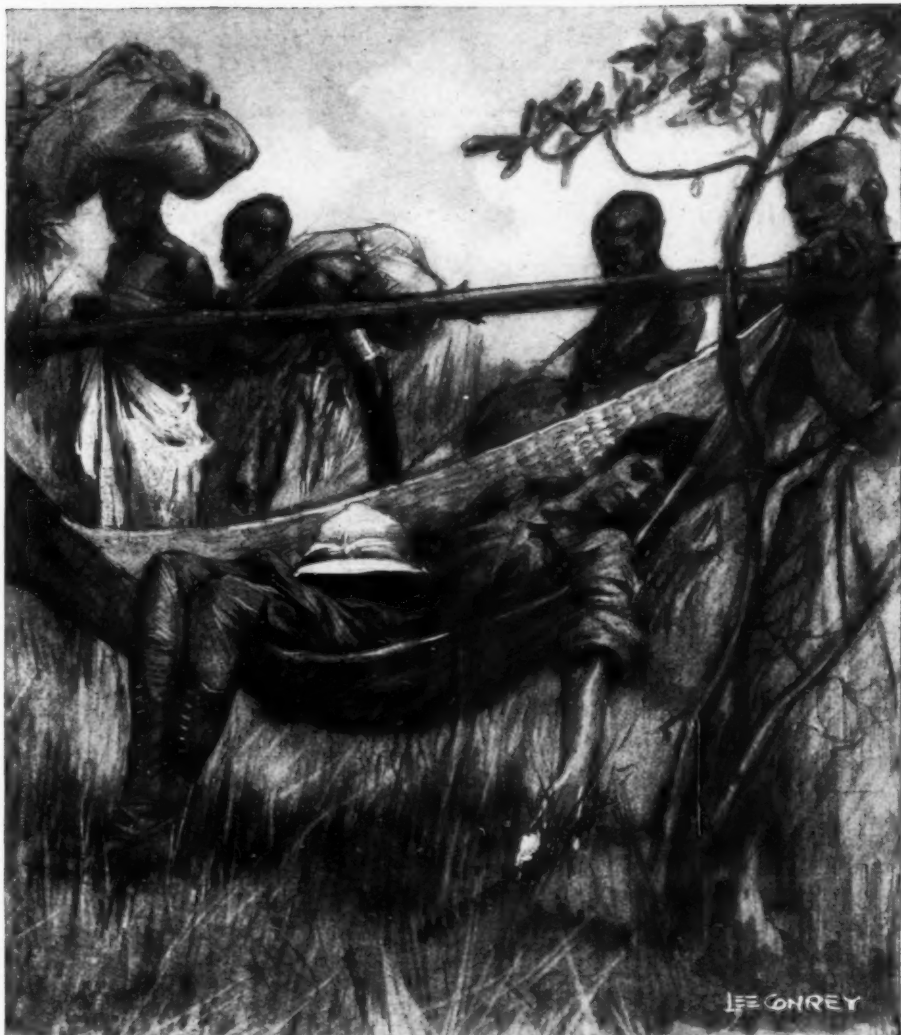
THE BLISSFULLY IGNORANT MISS HUME WAS IN A HEAVEN OF JOY FOR THE TEARING—

they were told that if they would stand by the ant-hill which marked the very center of the elevation, the buffalo would come to them.

They waited for half an hour, then Rordon began to get impatient.

"From which side will the game come?" he asked in proper roundabout fashion. The direction indicated made him snort. "Ibrahim," he said, "these old women are trying to make me believe that buffalo will come straight up the wind to where we are waiting for them."

"Master," affirmed Ibrahim, "it is true. These buffalo plenty *skelum*, like I tell you.



—SPIRIT OF THE SONG AND OF WONDER FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH SHE WAS BEING WAFTED ALONG

Not afraid white man—not afraid gun. Always walk straight.”

“Well,” said Rordon, “I don’t believe it. I’m going after them. Which side will you take, Charlie?”

“I’ll admit you know ten to my one on game habits, Flange,” said Harlow; “but somehow I believe these niggers. If they make a preposterous statement, it’s pretty apt to be true. I’ll stay here.”

“All right,” said Rordon, in evil humor; “but you’d better send for a tent.”

He took observations as to wind and the lay of the land, and started down the slope toward the deep fringe of reeds and swamp

which made of the knoll an island within an island. Just as he was taking the plunge into the twelve-foot elephant-grass, his gun-bearer gave a low whistle dramatically burdened with awe.

Rordon stopped at once and slowly turned. His eyes followed the direction of the boy’s backward gaze and fell with chagrin on a great blot of black, level-backed, ponderous head hanging low, swinging along like a prize bullock conscious of his might straight for the spot where Harlow stood rifle to shoulder. Before Rordon could adjust himself to the sudden situation there came the crack of a first shot

taken at too long a range, and instantaneously there followed straight up the wind toward his assailant, the furious charge of the bull.

With a swift sweep, Rordon's rifle caught up with the moving blur. Even in the strain of the lightning movement he was conscious of Harlow standing like a man, but tragically slow in firing after his first hasty shot. Feeling a responsibility that brought cold sweat out in globules on his brow, Rordon passed the racing blur with his forward sight and drew trigger. The bull staggered mightily; his hind quarters sagged, but with his forelegs and ponderous shoulders he clawed his way forward and carried Harlow to earth in a swirl of dust, grass, and flying pebbles.

"My God!" groaned Rordon as he rushed forward, cursing himself almost with a whimper for being too late.

The bull lay with all four feet under him, his great muscles still swelled from the last desperate struggle to kill where he had been killed. Under his massive head, which ran at the nostrils with blue-black blood, was pinioned Harlow's right leg. Harlow himself, white as a sheet, stared dazedly into the small, vindictive, blood-red eyes, still open, of the dead beast.

"Charlie!" cried Rordon. "Thank God, I got him in time!"

"Got what?" demanded Harlow truculently, his eyes blazing with sudden fury. "Do you think for one minute you killed this family pet?"

"I suppose you broke his spine from in front," said Rordon, face to face with the greatest ingratitude he had ever met.

"Broke his spine!" repeated Harlow angrily. "Here, do you call this his spine?"

He reached out his hand and ran his index-finger deep into the bull's skull.

Rordon's face cleared as he took a step forward and saw that Harlow had indeed made a perfect frontal shot to the brain. On the instant he recognized that his own shot, while mortal, could never have stopped the bull in time. He shouted for help to the boys, who were only now returning from the urgent business that had so suddenly called them elsewhere—all but Harlow's stanch gun-bearer, Abdul—and with their aid released the victor from his imprisonment.

"Is your leg broken, Charlie?" he asked solicitously.

"I should say it is," replied Mr. Harlow

gloomily; "in three places, at least; but it was worth it."

"Lie down," ordered Rordon, and, having removed Harlow's puttee, with practised but ungentle fingers he began to search out the bones from the thigh down.

Harlow soon found that to groan meant a deeper dig at the same spot. He controlled himself, and when the examination was done, felt both annoyed and relieved at Rordon's verdict.

"Get up, you malingering soldier! Forget it. Stand up and let me shake hands, for you're a man to-day, Charlie. Come and look at the brute."

"I have been looking at him," said Harlow with unconscious humor. "It seems to me I saw him running at me for ages."

He arose painfully and limped around the fallen bull. When he came to the spine wound of Rordon's bullet, he stopped and examined it critically.

"That certainly helped, Flange," he said. "I apologize; but somehow I wish you had missed and given us an even show. He most surely was a fighter. I would have liked to have had him all for my own, even if he'd got me right."

"Don't worry," said Rordon. "He's all your own, and a pippin of a trophy. Let's measure."

They lingered for two hours over taping the horns and carcass and skinning the mask with extra care, Rordon himself making the sweeping cut far back on the shoulders and deep in the chest.

"It's the hardest thing in shooting," he explained, "to get a native skinner to leave enough flap. More trophies have been ruined by skimping than by any two other faults."

With the killing of the buffalo bull, Harlow received the accolade of a past master in the enterprise of big-game-shooting, and was treated with a greater respect than ever by Rordon. He was amused, however, by the chorus of comment from the native mind, which never by any chance sees virtue in personal prowess, all victories of the sportsman being invariably ascribed either to "medicine" or a "good" gun.

The epic battle had a further psychological effect—it put a noble climax to the shooting in the Bandar country that made further local efforts seem demeaning. Without parley the whole party turned their faces forward on a common impulse. They needed only a goal.

Rordon looked out upon the wide, silvery sheet of the great river and recognized in it the road home. Reluctantly he gave voice to his thoughts, but to his deep pleasure, as well as to his surprise, neither Miss Hume nor Harlow showed any enthusiasm for hiring a flatboat and floating down to Chinde and a steamer.

Rordon looked at them



ACROSS THE
CROOK OF HER
ARM LAY A RIFLE.
SHE WAS EVIDENTLY
KEEPING VIGIL

and felt a pardonable pride in his handiwork. An inspecting angel, sent out to report in detail on the progress of the human race, could not but have experienced a thrill at coming upon this group of three young people, level-eyed, clear-skinned, lithe, and potent of limb, standing between forest and flood like ready pioneers at any door of destiny.

Into their flippant blood had entered an alchemy which left them changed, not for a casual interim, but for all time. They

had not forgotten the flesh-pots of Egypt—far from it. The memory of those culinary adjuncts had become a lasting incentive, inspiring them with the true spirit of adventure which is summed up in the motto, "Never look back." So intensive had been their processes of rejuvenation that even the curse on the fatal number of three, traveling together, had been lifted.

Since the first day of safari, Harlow had been so rapt from ordinary emotions by absorption in his own individual salvation through widening his capacity for coping with an entrancingly new combination of circumstances, that for him Miss Hume had

more than lost her prerogative of gender—she had become merely a pleasing portion of the new landscape.

She, in turn, had been thrown more and more into society with Rordon—to their mutual benefit, for there is no more broadening companionship than that of a man and a woman who build slow friendship on a foundation of conscious emotional restraint. Rordon and Miss Hume liked each other, but they never said so. If they had skated at least twice on thin ice, and thereby produced a thrilling ringing in the ears, still they had never surrendered to an unbridled greed for a sensation which remained a sensation because it was rare.

Thinking these thoughts vaguely, and rebelling instinctively against the waste of leading his remarkably efficient group aimlessly back to the domain of uselessness, Rordon cast about in his mind for a worthier goal, and finally spoke.

"This is the first day of July," he said. "It is written that in the month of August certain large trees on the Rovuma put forth tender shoots which are to elephant as catnip is to cats. We could reach the Rovuma in one month's travel."

"Did you say elephant?" asked Harlow, his eye brightening. "Let us depart that I may see them, meet them, and die happy any time thereafter."

"Yes," agreed Miss Hume. "Let's do anything but turn back."

They swept down the placid river to sounds of rattling punting-poles and many boat-boys' chanteys, all highly immoral, unintelligible to Miss Hume and Harlow, but universally inspiring. They traveled by day and by night, camping only when mood and a likely spot happened to occur in conjunction.

"Happy are the days of others' toil," chanted Harlow, "when warriors grow fat on the memory of merit, and wood-nymphs in symphonic brown dispense with puttees and bask their ravishing legs in the sun of idleness along the monotonous banks of the silver tide whose name is content to the weary."

For some recondite reason this song of songs aggravated Rordon. Why should Harlow, who had attended strictly to his own business during many weeks, suddenly wake up to the loveliness of Miss Hume's brown-clad nether extremities? Why should he have developed the consummate nerve to sing about them? The answer was that he

needed exercise, and Rordon promptly proceeded to procure it for him. By a long palaver he professed to have learned that the inland channel from Maxaro to Quelimane was hopelessly blocked with water-plants and silt. He therefore disembarked the expedition for an overland trek, and led them, Harlow grumbling, through six days of gameless country.

At Quelimane they discharged all porters, guides, and trackers, replenished their supplies, and, together with Ibrahim and the three gun-bearers—namely, Mohammed, Rordon's trustee, Abdul, Harlow's henchman, and Shef, Miss Hume's weary shadow—took a filthy little coasting steamer to the port of Parapato. They got off there for no other reason than to escape from the peculiar smell of all craft used in carrying natives to and from the mines of the Rand. It got into their clothes, their food, and their sleep to such an extent that Harlow and Rordon were both overjoyed when Miss Hume declared for the land at any price.

Three weary days were spent in gathering a safari; then with a sigh of relief they once more turned their backs on the fringe of an unexciting world rotting in peace to a dead level of crass commercialism and its corollary, the gratification of stereotyped desires at market prices, and made for the wilderness and the Rovuma. They reached the river during the first week in August, as Rordon had predicted, and, after an inspection of its vicinity, which showed no signs of elephant having arrived, carefully chose a spot for a permanent camp and settled down to rest and wait.

XIII

THREE days later one of the runners whom Rordon had sent ahead to spy out the chances for game, arrived in great excitement, with a tale of a monster herd of elephant which had destroyed the shambas of a kraal two days' trek to the north. Caching all trophies, two-thirds of their supplies, one of the tents, and every other superfluous article, the safari crossed the Rovuma before day. The porters were laden only with half-loads, consequently Rordon issued his orders against stragglers; the expedition as a unit was to do three miles an hour for ten hours out of every twenty-four.

Thirty miles a day is stiff traveling with a commissary, and even the unburdened

Harlow, and Miss Hume, on her pony, were taxed to the full limit of their powers; but they uttered no word of complaint, and took silent satisfaction in watching the gray salt gather almost to a crust on the faces of the Swahilis and the blacks. Only Rordon seemed to be quite comfortably in his element, carried along by an exciting incentive.

It was toward evening of the second day that they entered the great kraal of the Massassi. Rordon was in the lead as they passed through one of the several narrow portals which pierced the mile-long circular boma, or stockade of living cactus; and he hurried by the outer circles of huts to the inner beaten court, eager to place the camp before sundown.

Almost every village or kraal in Africa centers about just such a patio as now opened before his eyes—a vast, hard-beaten arena dominated by two or more giant shade-trees, generally of the acacia family, under which it is the custom of the men to sit, smoke, gossip, and govern from sunrise to sunset. At the first glance there was nothing startling to an old-timer about the Massassi's communal audience-hall; but before he had taken two steps into its circumference, Rordon came to a jolting stop.

Under the fringe of one of the great trees was pitched a white man's tent; before it stood a camp table and a chair. In the chair sat a girl, blatantly English. Her helmet had fallen to the ground, revealing disordered heaps of golden hair piled upon her head. Her chin rested on her hand, her elbow upon the table, in a gesture of indescribable weariness. Across the crook of her arm lay a rifle. She was evidently keeping vigil with eyes dazed to a fathomless blue in their desperate effort to keep awake.

Her pose not only arrested Rordon; it put him on the alert to other strange things. The kraal was silent and apparently deserted, yet it lacked the unmistakable air of an abandoned habitation. One felt that it was far from being uninhabited, and that from nook, cranny, and shadow, eyes were watching.

Rordon turned, pushed back the first arriving porters, and beckoned to Miss Hume and Harlow. They joined him, and he held them back until their gasps of surprise had settled into controlled wonder. Then he said:

"Come on."

They advanced on the girl. When she became aware of their approach she awoke from her set pose with a start and immediately grasped her rifle. Then her eyes fell upon Miss Hume. She arose, gazed unbelievably, took two staggering steps, and threw herself sobbing into Helen's arms.

"Oh!" she gasped, and crumpled into a pitiful heap on the ground.

Rordon and Harlow sprang forward, picked her up, and carried her into the tent, where they laid her on a cot. They left her there in Miss Hume's charge, and stepped out to meet the bulk of the safari.

"Ibrahim!" yelled Rordon, in a voice that tore the ominous silence into shreds. "Get the king of this stinking kraal out to call on me. Get him quick, or when he comes I'll make him eat the tail of a pig. Tell him that!"

Immediately all was commotion, yells, curses, objurgations, and shrieks of provoking laughter. The safari was in no timid mood. Catching promptly the spirit of its masters, it was hungry for trouble.

"Easy, Ibrahim," warned Rordon. "No fighting!"

Ibrahim, with the help of his Swahili compatriots and the two askaris, herded the porters, who were on the verge of running amuck, under one of the big trees, and made each stand by his load. Then he stood forth and called in a loud voice for the men of the kraal to come out and greet a greater than ever their porcine eyes had yet beheld; one to whom elephants were playthings, the leopard brother, and lions as Kafir dogs to watch his camp at night.

They came—first the old men, then the younger, by ones, twos, and threes, until a vast squatting circle was formed around Rordon and Harlow, who by royal right sat on boxes. The palaver began with surly grunts of ungracious welcome, and went on and on in endless argument as to whether the chief of the kraal was or was not many days' journey away from that spot.

Rordon talked and talked with apparently inexhaustible patience, but the twitching of his eyebrows and the tense lines that drew deep parentheses to the corners of his mouth told Harlow that his friend was being eaten with anxiety.

"I'm trying to say something that will

make them laugh," whispered Rordon in an aside. "If I could only make them laugh!"

"What's up?" asked Harlow.

"There's trouble in the air," answered Rordon. "I would believe that whoever was with that girl had been killed, if it weren't for the fact of the girl herself. Now they're bluffing that the chief of this kraal is away on a journey, but as a matter of fact he's in the third hut on the left from where we sit."

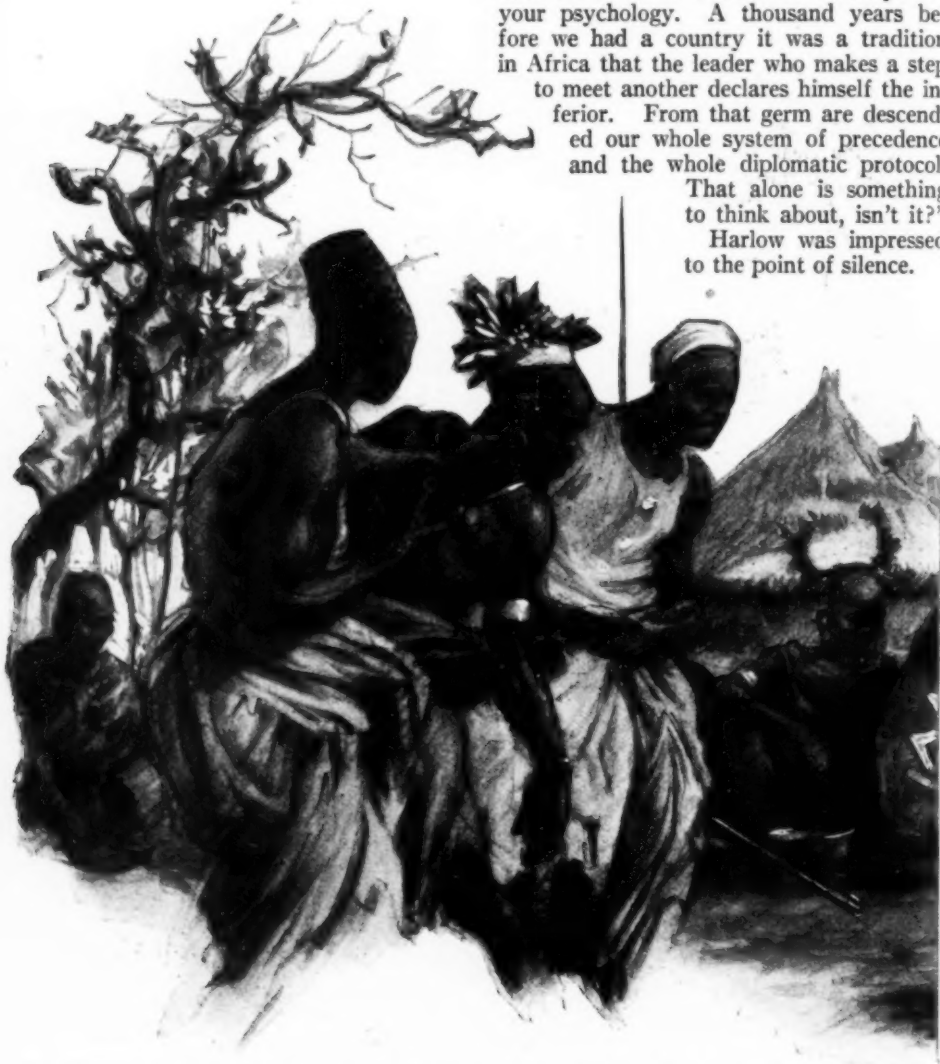
"Well," said Harlow, "if you know where he is, and really want to see him, why don't you go over and kick the door in? Aren't you losing your American point of view about kings?"

Rordon rattled off the next few moves in argument to Ibrahim, and then half turned toward Harlow.

"Charlie," he said, "the native mind is as simple, as interesting, and as exact as the insides of a clock, if—and it's a big 'if'—you never take your eyes off it to look at a white brain and thereby mix your psychology. A thousand years before we had a country it was a tradition in Africa that the leader who makes a step to meet another declares himself the inferior. From that germ are descended our whole system of precedence and the whole diplomatic protocol.

That alone is something to think about, isn't it?"

Harlow was impressed to the point of silence.



FOLLOWING UPON GUTTURAL GURLINGS OF OUTRAGED ROYALTY, KWA KWA, KING OF THE MASSASSI
BY LINEAL RIGHT, ISSUED FORTH, EACH OF HIS LARGE EARS IN THE
CLUTCH OF A GRINNING ASKAR

"But we haven't time just now," Rordon continued, "for a study of the tremendous influence of African traditions on civilized humanity. This is what we are up against. We are in the dead center of a hostile community that only lacks the incentive of concerted action to wipe us out. Our salvation lies in the fact that the African, whatever may have been planned, never arrives at actual concerted action by counsel or an order from authority. He works himself up to it by talk of an exciting nature, as our boys have been doing during the last hour or two, or by dancing and drink. If I don't get a laugh, or at least a grin, out of these palaverers in five minutes, I'm going to declare war. Before the girls come out, let me tell you that our chances of getting clear are about one in ten."

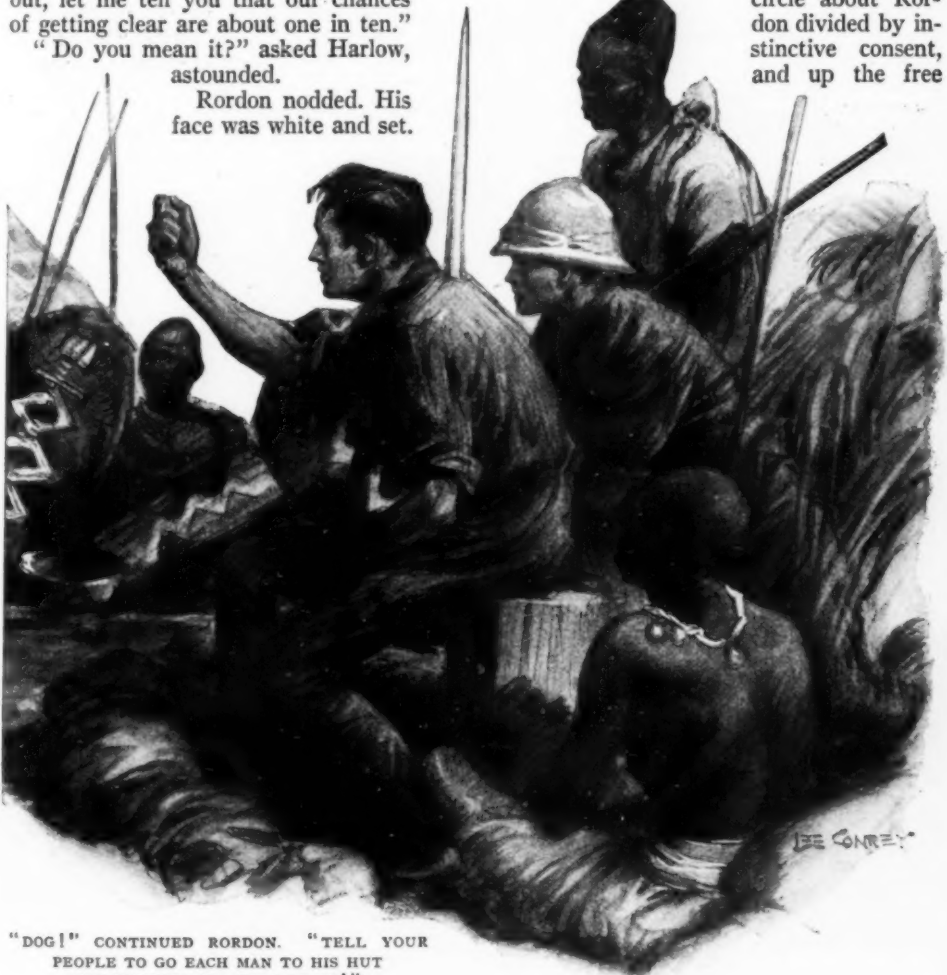
"Do you mean it?" asked Harlow, astounded.

Rordon nodded. His face was white and set.

"I'll not wait the five minutes," he suddenly decided. "Ibrahim," he continued in Swahili, "the king of these people is in the third hut to the left. Let the askaris bring him by the ears. You understand? By the ears."

Ibrahim smiled, and over the faces of the many natives who understood Swahili, the *lingua franca* of the East Coast, spread a look of dismay comical in its unbelief and intensity. Before the expression had time to pass, the mat door of the chief's hut was torn aside, and, following upon guttural gurglings of outraged royalty, Kwa Kwa, king of the Massassi by lineal right, issued forth, each of his large ears in the clutch of a grinning askar.

The horrified circle about Rordon divided by instinctive consent, and up the free



"DOG!" CONTINUED RORDON. "TELL YOUR PEOPLE TO GO EACH MAN TO HIS HUT AND STAY THERE. TELL THEM!"

channel was dragged the captive lord, his bloodshot eyes bulging with wrath and fear.

"Give him no seat," said Rordon in Swahili, thus robbing royalty of its first prerogative over the common herd. "Dog!" he continued, his jaw set and his eyes blazing. "I come into your miserable kraal bearing good-will and the gifts of peace, and you, the earthworm, refuse to crawl out of your hole! Listen to my words. Tell your people to go each man to his hut and stay there. Tell them!"

The chief broke into a flood of abject denial of offense. His messengers had betrayed him, they had sent him no word, he had not known until the advent of the askaris of the august presence of kingly guests. He would give orders that presents be brought—presents of such magnitude that the M'sungu would recognize at once how far from his thoughts had been a breach of the etiquette due from one king to another.

"I will have no present," declared Rordon, "save the order I have asked of you. Tell your people to go each man to his hut." He made a gesture to the askaris. "Twist his ears that he may speak the louder; twist them until every man has disappeared into his hut!"

The command was obeyed.

"Now," said Rordon, "let go of him, but remember that he is to remain within ten feet of me night and day, where we can kill him easily if trouble of any kind comes from his people."

He turned from the now groveling native to give instructions to Ibrahim.

"We must set camp here, because it is too late to move. Put up no tent; the missis will sleep with the new missis. Make women bring plenty wood; start a big fire between every two huts—at the back, near the boma, so that none can move without our seeing. We'll keep watch to-night."

"Charlie," he said, "I wish to God Miss Hume was back on the Aspic roof!"

Nothing else he could have said would have carried with it so effectively a conviction of the true state of affairs.

"Flange," said Harlow, his legal mind leaping to meet a genuine crisis, "what authority have your askaris on this side of the Rovuma?"

"None," said Rordon. "There's only one authority as far as we're concerned, and its name is bluff. We have the grip

so far, and we've got to hold it or go under. Don't think for a moment that I had any choice from the very start. It was a marked road."

Harlow's face broke into a smile expressive of a number of things—fealty, admiration, genuine affection.

"You certainly followed it, Flange. Now quit worrying about Nell; you've got enough on your shoulders without that. We're here; we'll get out. I'm with you!"

"Thanks, Charlie," said Rordon, and then turned to greet Miss Hume. "Well," he asked, "how's the fainting lady?"

"Fainting?" said Miss Hume. "She didn't faint at all; she simply went sound asleep and dropped."

"Is that a fact?" asked Rordon.

He arose and led the way into the tent. The strange girl was slumbering.

"I hate to do it, but we'll have to waken her. We've got to know where we stand. Shake her, Helen."

It took some time to drag the girl back from the far country of the completely exhausted, but in due course she opened her eyes, gazed about her in dazed questioning, attained consciousness, and finally sat up with a strained smile of polite greeting.

"You are not a dream," she said to Miss Hume in a voice remarkable for its deep, throaty timbre.

"No," said Miss Hume, gasping with admiration of a gentle beauty so opposite to her own that it filled all the requirements of a foil, but still lacked the imitative thorn of rivalry. "What is your name?"

"Helen Brunt," said the vision.

"That will never do," said Rordon. "You see, Miss Hume's name is Helen, and we've got enough complications without doubling up on names."

"I see," said the girl, looking him over coolly. "Of course you might call me Miss Brunt, but, as it happens, I have plenty of other names. Mary, Helen, Priscilla, and Janet were my aunts; I was named after all of them."

She was so calm, so socially at her ease, in spite of the nervous clasp of her hands and the wandering of her troubled gaze, that Harlow took courage and spoke.

"They are all nice names," he said, "but Mary is the nicest, because if we ever get to know you well we could call you Molly."

She gave him the cool, measuring look

that she had lately bestowed on Rordon; her lips opened slowly, thought better of what they were about to say, and closed. She looked wistfully at Miss Hume, as if the sight of her were the only comfort in a desperate world. Her mouth trembled.

Terrified at the prospect of tears, Rordon intervened.

"Look here, Miss Brunt," he said in his most matter-of-fact voice. "You need food, rest, a good cry-talk with Miss Hume, and more sleep. We all know that; but first of all you must just buck up and tell me why you're here alone. I'm not idly curious, but I've just had the chief of this kraal dragged into my presence by the ears; and if you know as much about Africa as I think you do, you'll realize that I want all the information there is."

Miss Brunt's eyes lighted with interest.

"You really did that?" she asked.

"I did," assured Rordon.

He pulled back the flap of the tent, so that she could see the disconsolate chief sitting between the two askaris.

"You've heard of Francis Merton?" she asked doubtfully.

"I should say yes!" exclaimed Rordon. "Sleeping-sickness, beriberi, and pneumonia bugs; habitat and alimentation of the tsetse fly independent of game, and a dozen more claims to fame. A great scientific record. Was he with you?"

Miss Brunt nodded gravely and deliberately turned disconcerting eyes on Harlow's face, which at the moment presented a study in crestfallen puzzlement, as if this matter of the identity, person, precedents, and purposes of Dr. Francis Merton had inexplicably and suddenly become his own peculiar affair.

"Two nights ago," she continued, "we heard guns—big guns. Frank listened to them with an absent-minded smile for about ten minutes; then he suddenly turned white as fleece, and almost fell out of his chair. I'll never forget what he said or the way he said it—'England and Germany are at war!'"

Her eyes glowed with a deep fire—the fire of long waiting—as she turned them back to Rordon.

"That night," she resumed, "my brother was kidnaped—"

"Your brother?" interrupted Rordon.

"Well," said Miss Brunt, "Frank is in fact my stepbrother, but I never think of

him that way. He nursed me as a kiddy, and practically brought me up."

"Did he, really?" broke in Harlow with such eagerness that Rordon, Miss Hume, and Miss Brunt all stared at him in amazement. He turned a deep red, and made an effort at composure which seesawed between the tragic and the absurd. "Of course, if you say so, we—er—we believe it. It's quite satisfactory—er—to us."

Miss Brunt glanced in dismay from Miss Hume's face to Rordon's and back again.

"What is it?" her eyes seemed to ask.

"Don't mind him," murmured Miss Hume, but quite audibly. "We brought him to Africa so that his friends might not know. He is Mr. Charles Harlow, of New York. And this," she added in her normal voice, "is Flange Rordon."

"Rordon!" exclaimed Miss Brunt. "Why, Frank has wished for you aloud so often that though he has never met you, I was sick of your name; but I'm glad you've come—oh, so glad! Rordon!"

The light of day faded from Harlow's face. He left the tent and went out to cheer himself up with staring at the miserable and debased king.

Within the tent Rordon continued his examination.

"You say Merton was kidnaped?"

"I'm sure of it," answered Miss Brunt, "and by natives from this kraal. He had given orders to break camp at dawn, and we were going to make for the Rovuma and Portuguese East. When I woke up, Frank was gone. I sat by the table with a gun handy until you came."

"You're a plucky one, all right!" said Rordon admiringly, and then subsided into thought. "I've got it," he said finally. "In their own mysterious way these Germans knew what was coming. They also knew that the brain of Dr. Francis Merton is incidentally a map of this half of Africa. Anticipating the need for such a map, they issued their orders attached to a reward. Your brother is on his way to colony headquarters, or at least to a German camp."

Miss Brunt nodded her agreement with his conclusions.

"What—what are you going to do?" she asked a little hopelessly.

"Eat," said Rordon.

Even as he spoke, Ibrahim thrust his head into the tent and announced:

"Scoff ready, master."

(To be continued in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

The Odd Measure

Will History
Once More
Repeat Itself?

*The Most Costly
Modern Wars
Did Not Bring
National Ruin*

PESSIMISM or optimism?—that is the great question of the day in the world of business. The pessimist declares that Europe is ruined; that the belligerents can never pay off their colossal debts, which in some cases are quite or nearly equal to their whole national wealth; and that even the United States will feel for years to come the burden of our huge war loans and the consequent high taxes. But all his arguments cannot convince the optimist, who persists in predicting prosperity.

Long views, as a rule, are the best guides in such matters. History shows that more than once, in modern times, the world has suffered such losses that the pessimists have lost hope; but humanity has always risen to the occasion and regained its balance.

In 1793, at the beginning of the Napoleonic wars, England's national debt stood at \$1,300,000,000. If it could have been foreseen that in twenty-two years of warfare \$3,125,000,000 would be added to that already formidable figure, few Englishmen would have believed that their country could avoid bankruptcy. And yet, emerging from the long struggle, England went on, after a brief period of readjustment, to an era of enlarged productivity and greatly increased wealth.

Just before our Civil War the public debt of the United States was less than \$65,000,000. At that time no financier would have thought it possible for the nation to pile up during the next five years an additional indebtedness of \$2,268,000,000, to increase its annual tax-bill from \$52,000,000 to \$557,000,000, and yet to bear the burden without a sign of faltering.

The cost of the late war, of course, has been far heavier than that of any previous conflict; but the world's financial and industrial powers are also much greater than ever before. Is it not safe, taking the long view, to predict that history will again repeat itself, and that all our material losses will ultimately be made good, and more?

* * * * *

A Serious
Indictment
of Dogs

*They Are the
Deadly Enemies
of a Valuable
Industry*

EVERY one agrees that the dog—the ideal dog, the dog at his best—is a noble animal; but hard facts show that the ordinary, average dog, as he exists in countless numbers throughout the country, is a costly and almost unmitigated nuisance.

With its vast area and fertile soil, and with the present demand for meat and wool, the United States ought to raise several times as many sheep as it does now. Why can it not do so? Authorities on the subject agree that the chief reason is the plague of sheep-killing dogs. More than a hundred thousand sheep are slaughtered each year by dogs, most of which are utterly worthless curs. Not long ago the International Harvester Company asked five thousand farmers why they did not keep sheep, or did not keep more sheep, and all but eighteen gave as their reason the pest of dogs.

The Department of Agriculture is campaigning for better laws for the protection of sheep from dogs. Secretary Houston has asked the Governors of States whose Legislatures meet this year to endeavor to secure the enactment of statutes similar to those now in operation in a few States—New York, for instance. Laws giving the farmer a right to sue for compensation when his sheep are killed are not satisfactory, even when he can collect his money. The country needs meat and wool, not dead sheep and damage-suits.

The dog is on the defensive, and there are other charges against him. He is a carrier of rabies, hog-cholera, foot-and-mouth disease, lice, ticks, and other parasites and diseases. He carries infection into the home as no other animal does.

He is the only animal that runs at will over other people's fields, yards, and sheepfolds. The most worthless cur has a freedom denied to cattle, horses, hogs, and sheep.

The dog-owner should be compelled to keep his dog at home or under his control at all times. It is not fair that the sheep-owner should have to build a dog-proof fence to keep dogs out. The dog-owner should build it and keep his dog inside it.

* * * * *

Will England Admit Women as Barristers?

*A Question That
Is Now Stirring
London's Historic
Inns of Court*

WHEN two well-known American jurists, Paul D. Cravath and James M. Beck, were made benchers of Gray's Inn, London, not long ago, it was recorded as a memorable event in legal annals; but a more striking and memorable change is contemplated by the removal of the historic barrier against the admission of women to the legal profession in England. It was with some concern that Lord Desart has informed the House of Lords that the benchers of the Four Inns are exercised in their minds as to the results of the innovation which would admit women as students for the bar. The Inns of Court, or the four legal societies of London—the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and Gray's Inn—have long exercised the right of calling students to the bar.

History is silent as to how this right arose. In Anglo-Saxon days there were no lawyers in England. In Norman times clerics and members of minor orders gave advice on law, but in 1207 the clergy were excluded from the secular courts. It has been suggested that the origin of the inns lies in the groups of lay students of the law who lived in hostels in London and studied canon law with the clergy of one or another of the churches. These hostels adopted the customs of Oxford, such as taking the principal meal of the day together, and choosing certain leaders or spokesmen, who are the precursors of the modern benchers.

In course of time they became firmly established as part of the national legal life of England, and they are now recognized as "voluntary incorporated societies of equal rank and status, independent of the state, outside the jurisdiction of the courts, but subject to the visitatorial jurisdiction of the judges"—language which is both legal and ecclesiastical. They have monopolized the right of determining what person shall be heard in the high courts of England, for the power of call to the bar remains in the hands of the benchers, and a barrister is compelled to pay large fees for admission.

It is not likely that the inns will continue to oppose women students, and the Lord Chancellor has announced that if Parliament makes the change, the benchers will assist in carrying it out.

One suggestion has been the establishment of a fifth Inn of Court for women, which would obviate the difficulty of admitting women to commons, or mess, with the men. The dining problem, however, is not the only one, the question of garb or dress being equally important. Shall the aspiring *Portia* wear a wig and gown, a black velvet biretta, or a mortar-board? The Inns of Court are shaken, but the question is unsolved.

During the war there was a searching for precedents at the Middle Temple. A soldier-student presented himself for call; the benchers saw him in uniform *plus* wig and gown, and did not like it; they saw him in uniform and wig without gown, and in uniform and gown without wig. Finally the learned judge of the court solved the difficulty.

"The king's uniform is good enough for me," he said, and in the king's uniform the soldier-barrister was called.

* * * * *

Possible
Benefits from
a Horror
of the War

*Poison Gas
May Be Used
to Exterminate
Rats and to
Quell Riots*

AMONG the odd discoveries of the war was a use for the evil mustard gas with which the Germans deluged the Allied trenches. It was found that rats, swarms of which infested the dugouts and made night hideous for the men, fled from the neighborhood of the gas-shells, if they could get away in time, and did not return; and it has been seriously suggested that, under careful supervision, such gases might usefully be employed to rid ships and towns of one of civilization's most destructive pests and most dangerous disease-carriers.

The spread of bubonic plague, trichinosis, foot-and-mouth disease, and equine influenza has at various times and places been traced to germs disseminated by rats. Hitherto, the fumigation of buildings and ships has been the most successful means of fighting the pest; but while the rat, for the most part, is dependent on man, living in his houses and feeding on his stores, it also makes itself at home on the banks of rivers and canals, and in the woods. Colonies of rats are also to be found on rocky sea-reefs, where they feed on shell-fish, as on Rat Island, in the Bristol Channel.

The rat is believed to have had its origin in central or eastern Asia, and to have trailed man in his course toward the setting sun. There is no trace of the animal in the fossil-beds of western Europe. Britain is said to have had its first rat invasion from the ships of the Crusaders, the immigrant species being the black rat. The larger and fiercer brown rat came into England from Germany during the reign of George I, and Waterton, the naturalist, who had no love for the first four Georges, often refers to the members of that royal dynasty as "Hanoverian rats."

Doubtless rats came to America on many a ship before the Mayflower, and they followed the pioneer as the tide of civilization moved westward. Government authorities and local health boards have long tackled the rat problem unsuccessfully. Perhaps the discovery in the trenches may supply a good purpose for Germany's evil invention.

It has also been suggested that some of the milder gases used in the war, especially the so-called "tear gas," might be used in police work, as they would be very effective in dispersing a disorderly crowd without inflicting anything worse than temporary disability upon the rioters.

* * * * *

If Germany
Had Had Our
Supply of
Helium Gas

*Her Zeppelin
Campaign Might
Not Have Failed
as It Did*

ONE of the most remarkable discoveries of the war was that of a supply of helium gas in production quantities, from wells in Texas. It was badly needed for air-ships. While hostilities lasted, the discovery was kept a profound secret, which our Navy Department shared with the British Admiralty. A British naval mission visited America in 1917, pretending to be on the lookout for argon, another rare gas, heavier than air, and found in small quantities in the atmosphere, while in reality it was investigating the question whether America could produce helium; and as a result of that mission, a generous supply of the gas was shipped to England shortly before the armistice. Its production was in the hands of Admiral Griffin, United States Navy.

If the Germans had had helium to inflate their Zeppelins for air-raids over London and other cities, the bravery of the Allied aviators would have availed little. The leakage from a small hole in a Zeppelin envelope caused by an aviator's machine-gun bullet is slow. Moreover, the envelope itself is composed of a number of gas-tight compartments, so that the main weakness of the Zeppelin lay in the inflammable nature of the gas it contained. It was this factor that caused the Germans to call off their Zeppelin campaign.

It was this, too, that played such havoc with observation-balloons along

the front. At a lucky shot from a swooping airplane, the observer swinging in his basket below saw his balloon crumple up in flames, often before he had time to seek safety in a parachute descent.

Helium is heavier than hydrogen and lighter than nitrogen. It is found to the extent of one per cent of certain natural gases in Texas, and to produce it everything else has to be liquefied, the helium alone remaining gaseous. It was first identified by Sir Joseph Norman Lockyer, in 1868, during an observation of an eclipse of the sun. Discovered on the earth in cleveite by Ramsay, in 1895, it occurs also in other minerals, associated with argon and nitrogen. It is also found in small quantities in the earth's atmosphere, in gases yielded by certain mineral waters, and in meteoric iron.

* * * * *

Who and What Are the Letts?

*Kinsmen of the
Prussians, They
Are Said to Be
Lenine's Fiercest
Supporters*

DESPATCHES from the troubled borders of Russia have asserted that the worst of the Bolshevik troops are Letts. On the other hand, there have come from Lithuania, the homeland of the Letts, indignant protests against this heinous charge, and emphatic assertions that neither they nor their kinsmen and neighbors, the Lithuanians, have demonstrated any sympathy with Bolshevism.

Who and what are the Letts, the reader may well inquire? The books tell us that they are a branch of the Letto-Lithuanian race, long domiciled in the Baltic provinces of Russia, and numbering about two million. They are rather close blood relations of the so-called Old Prussians and other Prussians of the Windic or Wendish tribes—a fact that may have a significant bearing on the question of their behavior in the faction fighting that now rends and racks the shattered frame of Russia. It makes it easier to accept the statement of a witness who testified at Washington that Lenine's high executioner at Moscow, the signer of wholesale death-warrants for all opponents of Bolshevism, is a Lett.

We gave the Prussians our trust on a surface guarantee, and we have had bloody cause to regret it. Just so, it appears, with the Letts, only, that much fewer of us knew them. Those who did liked them for their comfortable northern domesticity, and tried to overlook the fact that they were given to bullying and beating their dependents, and even their wives. Now we see that, Bolshevism being of course a product of Prussia infused into Russia, it is not surprising if the Lettish soldiery are among the most thoroughgoing supporters of the bloody-minded autocrat of Petrograd.

* * * * *

A Curious Corner of Prussia

*The Spreewald,
Where a Slav
Tribe Lives
Close to Berlin*

HOW the Prussians have from time immemorial been intermingled with non-German elements is illustrated by the fact that there is to-day a small but well-marked district near Berlin whose people are a little tribe of pure-blooded Slavs. It is known as the Spreewald, or Forest of the Spree, and its inhabitants are classified as Wends. It may be described as a northern rural Venice, and it is a happy hunting-ground for Berlin vacationists, or rather week-enders. The Spree—the river that passes close beside the Kaiser's former residence in Berlin—spreads out there in many branches, and between them canals have been dug. The water is the only highway where the Wends hold sway.

In spring-time the Spreewald is a pretty country, blooming with apple-trees wherever the ground is high enough, and lusciously verdant everywhere. Willows and reeds are the only crops the Wends tend with real care, for basket-weaving and the manufacture of woven pieces of furniture are the chief industries of the men. You can see them sitting outside their cabins, busy on a basket, a chair, or a table, meanwhile keeping an eye on the children. These Wendish men are like the cassowary birds in that they bring up the children while the mothers are away—in Berlin.

The women of the Spreewald leave their broods to the tender mercies

of the men-folk and the grandmothers to earn "easy money" by wet-nursing the babies of rich Berliners. They are a fine, grenadierlike lot and are made more imposing by their costumes—the short red skirts, the white stockings, the black-velvet, sleeveless corselets, and the enormous head-dresses of lace-edged linen folded so as to come down away between the shoulder-blades. The matrons of Berlin show as much pride in their Spreewälderinnen as do those of Paris in their beribboned Bretonnes, or those of Rome in the Abruzzi women who parade their mistresses' babies daily on the Pincian Hill.

Let Mr. Wilson's enthusiasts rest easy as to the "self-determination" of this small Slavic nationality within Prussia. As long as the Wendish women can earn good wages in Berlin, and the Wendish men can sit outside their cabins fashioning wickerwork, they are not likely to emulate the restless Letts, or Ukrainians, or any other of their cousins, and come forward with troublesome demands for recognition.

* * * *

The Strange Pseudonym of an Irish Author

How George Russell Came to Be Known as "A. E."

ONE of the most interesting figures of Irish literary and political life just now is George Russell, perhaps better known as "A. E."—a curiously intriguing pseudonym. The mysterious initials have a strange origin. A dreamer and artist from boyhood, in his Armagh home, he began at the age of seventeen or eighteen to paint a series of pictures of his dream world to illustrate the history of man from his origin in the mind of the Creator. First there were vague, monstrous forms, then figures of men-beasts and men-birds, and finally the divine idea, the perfect form of man, was born in space.

Young Russell called this series "The Birth of Aeon," a reminiscence, probably, of some of his gnostic readings, and so impressed was he with the idea that he resolved straightway to adopt the word "Aeon" as his pseudonym. A printer, however, of one of Russell's earliest writings, finding the handwriting not easy to decipher, set up only the first two letters, with a question-mark for the rest. Russell, correcting the proof, deleted the question-mark, leaving the two vowels standing, and thus he has signed his writings ever since.

* * * *

The Mysteries of English Pronunciation

It Is Risky to Frame Rules Without Full Consideration

A GOOD American citizen was mildly indignant on being told that he was not correct in saying, "I'll give you my *address*," with the accent on the first syllable of his last word.

"Certainly that's right!" he said. "There's a well-known rule that when a two-syllabled word is used both as a noun and as a verb, it's accented on the first syllable if it's a noun and on the last if it's a verb. Why, I'll undertake to give you a dozen instances offhand."

And he proceeded, with a little time for cogitation, to produce the following exhibits, all of which undoubtedly comply with his specifications:

Convict, export, import, annex, conduct, desert, compound, contest, produce, present, rebel, record.

"Your rule is a failure, nevertheless," said his friend and critic. "I admit that it seems to work with the words you have mentioned; but I'll undertake to give you twice as many, and equally common ones, that falsify it."

And he did. It did not take him five minutes to think of two dozen words used both as nouns and as verbs and pronounced identically in both senses. Cover, credit, merit, offer, honor, thunder, order, rescue, reason, season, master, purchase—in these the accent is always on the first syllable; while it is always on the last syllable in report, account, exchange, control, command, attack, effect, advance, attempt, preserve, ally, and alarm.

All of which goes to show that it is very difficult to make rules for the pronunciation of our noble and beloved, but unaccountable, language.

THE STAGE

WHAT THE MANAGERS ARE PROMISING AND MAY OR MAY NOT PERFORM IN THE
NEW THEATRICAL YEAR OF 1919-1920

By Matthew White, Jr.

WHAT is a legitimate theater? I am moved to put the question by glancing over an item in a Sunday newspaper of September 29 last, which stated that the opening of the new Selwyn Theater that week would bring the number of legitimate playhouses in New York to the record-breaking figure of forty-five. Making an enumeration of my own, I discover that this does not include the Metropolitan Opera House, the Hippodrome, the picture, vaudeville, and burlesque theaters, or neighborhood houses like the Standard, belonging to what is known as the Subway Circuit. Moreover, it refers only to those situated in the borough of Manhattan. In other words, the so-called legitimate theaters are those in which the managers produce new plays.

Now the theatrical season of 1918-1919 began on July 22. Down to September 29 there had been thirty-two new offerings, and of these thirteen had already failed; so you see that the producing managers have to take serious risks.

According to present plans for the coming winter, at least two, possibly three, new stages are to be added to the forty-five aforesaid. What we may see thereon depends not only on the arrangements the managers have already made, but on the fate of the early candidates for favor. For it is a self-evident fact that if all the forty-five pieces first sprung in July, August, and September register hits, there will be little chance of their being removed to make room for newcomers.

New pieces, however, must always be held in reserve. With almost half of the plays produced biting the dust in a little more than two months of operation, as was the case last year, managers cannot afford to run the risk of letting auditoriums go

dark because they have nothing ready to take the place of dead ones. You see now why play-producing is one of the biggest gambles outside of Monte Carlo.

Consider another side of the picture. Suppose that once in a blue moon it should happen that the critics, having gone the rounds of the forty-five New York houses, could spend their evenings at home for the rest of the season because every last one of the forty-five plays had made good to the tune of capacity audiences. That, of course, is an unheard-of situation; but even then the managers would not be altogether on Easy Street, for they would inevitably be so tied up by contracts to produce new pieces by a certain date that, with no houses in which to show them, the paying of forfeits to disappointed playwrights would eat seriously into their profits.

Speaking of forfeits, Mr. Belasco might be made poor by them if the cachet of a Belasco production didn't hypnotize most of the aspiring playwrights into being willing to wait indefinitely for the chance of seeing their names on the bill-boards in Forty-Fourth Street. He never makes more than three productions a season, and yet he has just announced sixteen new offerings, aside from certain Shakespeare revivals that he has in contemplation. At his present rate this would require, you see, at the very least five years to get them all on view.

That the wizard of the managers should take the public into his confidence so far ahead is quite unprecedented, but his hand was forced through the publication, early in May, of a report that he was about to retire after making one stupendous splash with a Japanese spectacle. On reading this, Mr. Belasco came back the very next day with the declaration that only death would

part him from his public, that the big thing hinted at was more Persian than Japanese, and that he had signed contracts with sixteen playwrights.

One of the sixteen is doubtless Avery Hopwood, with a comedy called "Topsy," for Ruth Terry, now appearing in the farce, "I Love You." I am wondering if this can be "The Little Clown," the Hopwood play which was scheduled for Billie Burke last year, but which never saw the footlights. Avery Hopwood appears again as the author of "The Gold Diggers," for Ina Claire, supported by Bruce McRae and Jobyna Howland.

Two of Mr. Belasco's other writers are new men—Achmed Abdullah, with a Chinese drama for Lenore Ulric, and Hubert Osborne, a young student in Professor Baker's play-writing course at Harvard. Henri Bataille, the Frenchman who is so Gallic in his ideas that he comes less often than his contemporaries to translation for Anglo-Saxon audiences, is also on the Belasco list; and so is a play from the French, "The Girl with the Pink Cheeks."

It is France that is to send us, *via* London, a romantic play in which Winthrop Ames will continue to keep Richard Bennett in the purple. This is to say that Bennett, identified all this year with "The Unknown Purple," is to step into Matheson Lang's shoes as *Armand* in "The Purple Mask," adapted by Charles Latour from "Le Chevalier au Masque," of Paul Armont and Jean Manousi, which, starting in London on July 10 last, has only recently been withdrawn, after playing three separate houses over there. The scene is laid in Paris in the first days of Napoleon's reign, and *Armand* is a royalist plotting to restore the throne to the Bourbons. The piece requires thirty principals, so that it will evidently not be put on at Mr. Ames's Little Theater, which has been taken over by Oliver Morosco for "Seven Miles to Arden," a dramatization by Anna Nicholas of a novel by Ruth Sawyer.

Mention of Arden reminds me that Shakespeare will be represented by the return to the stage of Sothorn and Marlowe in revivals—due early in October at the Forty-Fourth Street Theater—of "Twelfth Night," "Hamlet," and "The Merchant of Venice," under the auspices of Lee Shubert. Mr. Sothorn and his wife, Miss Marlowe, retired from the stage a couple of seasons ago, and were to live in England. Mr.

Sothorn, meantime, has been with the A. E. F. in entertainment work in France, and the English plans were never carried out.

For the first time in their career the Shuberts will go in heavily for foreign goods, J. J. Shubert, the younger brother, having recently returned from Europe with contracts for ten new productions of French or English origin. Among these are two by Henry Bernstein, who, however, has never in any way approached the success he scored with "The Thief," on which he is reported to have cleared two hundred thousand dollars in royalties. His "Israel," done here ten years ago, fell flat.

The first of the Bernstein plays to be offered by the Shuberts will be "Judith," a biblical drama. The other is "La Griffe"—"The Claw"—over a review of which, on its revival in 1909, Bernstein fought one of the usual bloodless Parisian duels. The fight was not directly evoked by the criticism, but by Bernstein's caustic retort thereto in a letter to the critic, who promptly sent a challenge to the playwright.

Bernstein's mother, by the bye, was an American, having been born in Baltimore. His latest play to receive production in New York was the fine drama of the great conflict recently closed, "L'Élévation," presented under that title by Grace George in the autumn of 1917.

Among the other French acquisitions of the Shuberts are "The House of Salabacca," a musical spectacle by Maurice Donnay, author of "The Education of a Prince" and "Bal Tabarin," a Parisian piece whose nature may be imagined from the title. The firm's importations from London will include "In the Night Watch," by Michael Morton, author of "The Yellow Ticket," "The Belle of Trouville," a musical comedy, and "Buzz Buzz," a *revue* running at the Vaudeville.

While on the subject of London offerings that we are to see, I may mention one not on the Shubert list, but which Walter Hast has been presenting in Chicago to enormous takings. This is "Scandal," by Cosmo Hamilton, a brother of Philip Gibbs, the war correspondent. It opened at the Strand with Arthur Bourchier and Miss Kyrle Bellew in early December, and is still playing there as I write, although the London *Stage* called it "a very artificial and theatrical piece of work bearing affinity both to the banal 'society drama' of the



MARILYN MILLER, A STRIKING FEATURE OF ZIEGFELD'S THIRTEENTH FOLLIES, AT THE NEW AMSTERDAM THEATER FOR THE SUMMER

From her latest photograph—Copyrighted by the Hixon-Connelly Studio, Kansas City

eighties and nineties and to the ordinary farce." It has the heavily overworked bedroom element of the latter, and it will be interesting to watch the Broadway career of the piece in comparison with its undoubted appeal to the taste of London's West End and Chicago's Loop.

Recent London disagreements with Manhattan's play verdicts are the cases of "The Man from Toronto," "By Pigeon Post," and "The Maid of the Mountains," all decided British hits and flat American failures. "Tillie," the play of the Menonite maid, a fiasco on the shores of the Hudson, is going big beside Lake Michigan.

A full list of the Shuberts' American productions is usually not made public until late in the summer, but one of their dramas already tried out and held in reserve for the autumn is "Those Who Walk in Darkness," by Owen Davis, based on a story by Perley Poore Sheehan, with Irene Fenwick. Also in the Shubert offering is the farce, "The Wicked Streak," by Otto Harbach and Edgar Franklin.

Morris Gest, son-in-law of Belasco, but affiliated with the Shuberts, is another of our managers who hastened to Europe at the first opportunity after the war to bag novelties for this side. The biggest thing he got was a fantasy, "Mecca," founded on an "Arabian Nights" tale, which was to have been done in London by Oscar Asche as a successor to "Chu Chin Chow"; but as the latter, now in its third year, is still packing them in at His Majesty's, it is likely that the New York production of "Mecca," at the Century, next February, will precede the London one. The piece will have nine sets and four hundred people, and will share first attention from Mr. Gest with "Aphrodite," a Paris spectacle affording opportunity for a riot of color, especially in its pageant of ancient Alexandria, for which the costumes are to be supplied by Leon Bakst and Percy Anderson.

Another importation of Mr. Gest's is the mirror-curtain for the Midnight Whirl on the Century Roof, giving those in the audience an opportunity to look at themselves between the numbers—a departure indeed from the present idea of soaping all mirrors in stage-settings in order that the people out front may not be distracted from the traffic on the boards.

A striking contrast to the big things among the European garnerings for Com-

stock & Gest will be "Phi Phi," a musical comedy with only six principals, eight chorus-girls, and one scene for its three acts. "The Luck of the Navy," a melodrama from the London Queen's Theater, will doubtless open here at the Manhattan Opera House in early October. The firm's other offerings will include "The Light of the World," originally called "The Cross," and then "Through the Ages," adapted by Guy Bolton and George Middleton from the French of Pierre Sasson. The theme of this is the Passion Play that used to be performed periodically at Ober-Ammergau, but for obvious reasons the German background has been changed to Switzerland. Among those in the cast are Pedro de Cordoba and Clara Joel. Bolton and Middleton have also written for Mr. Comstock a comedy called "Adam and Eve," which he will produce at the Longacre Theater in August, and at the Princess. Comstock & Elliott will present their seventh musical comedy, "Ladies, Please."

You may have noticed that John Drew did not play at all last season. Rumor assigns him to two different managers for the coming winter, but unifies on the one play, a comedy from the Italian, "The Ugly Ferenti." The report that Mr. Drew will return to the stage under the auspices of Arthur Hopkins doubtless had its origin in the fact that his two nephews, John and Lionel Barrymore, are with that proud producer of the year's artistic winner, "The Jest." It is more reasonable to suppose that he will continue with John D. Williams, who may give him Martha Hedman for leading lady, the staying powers of "Three for Diana," in which she was seen last spring, having failed her.

Speaking of failures, Ruth Chatterton scored her first last autumn with "Perkins," of which, as "The Man from Toronto," London playgoers can't seem to get enough. During the winter Henry Miller found for his star a new vehicle by George Scarborough, author of "The Heart of Wetona." In its try-out last spring it was called "The Merrie Month of May," but the name finally settled on and used in the Chicago run was "Moonlight and Honey-suckle." *Judith Baldwin*, not knowing which of various suitors to accept, decides to take the one who will not be feezed by her assertion that she is no better than she should be.

Grace Valentine's reward for her clever



IVY SAWYER, LEADING LADY OPPOSITE JOSEPH SANTLEY IN THE GLOBE'S SUMMER SHOW,
"SHE'S A GOOD FELLOW"

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York



MARY EATON, A HAPPY FEATURE IN THE FAMOUS COHANIZED OPERA COMIQUE, "THE ROYAL VAGABOND"

From a photograph by Campbell, New York

work as the manikin with Leo Carrillo in "Lombardi, Limited," is to be the title-rôle in the new play, "Mme. Sappho," by Frederic and Fanny Hatton, to be presented by Oliver Morosco at his New York Theater in September. Other Morosco offerings will be "Linger Longer, Letty," for the long-limbed Charlotte Greenwood, and one of a trio of three plays for Courtenay and Wise. The three now mentioned for the use of these stars are: "The Master Thief," from stories by Richard Washburn Child; "Slippy McGee," founded on the Marie Conway Oemler novel; and "The Pirate," a fantastic comedy with a Spanish background. There are other Morosco underlines, but as I can't possibly find space to enumerate all the possibilities of Al Woods and one or two others of our enterprising producers, I may as well begin to hedge right now.

Mr. Woods was the third New York manager to return from a play-picking jaunt to London. An early offering from the bunch he garnered will be "Home and Beauty," a comedy by Somerset Maugham, whose "Jack Straw," for John Drew, and "Lady Frederick," for Ethel Barrymore, made his name favorably known on this side of the Atlantic something less than ten years ago. From Edward Knoblock Woods has a drama with the weak title, "Mum-see," and from Michael Morton another with the rather appealing name, "Behind the Curtain." Also blessed with a catchy monniker is "Tillie of Piccadilly," by Ian Hay.

The same producer has likewise secured from Berte Thomas, author of "Under Orders," a new play called "Sinners Both"—from which it is not to be supposed, however, that the piece can be acted by only

two people, as was the case with "Under Orders." Nor has he escaped being bitten by the Oriental bug that has of late preyed upon so many of our managers, for his sponsorship goes up over "Fu Manchu," a Chinese melodrama by Sax Rohmer.

Other importations bearing the Woods brand will be: "Beginning Again," by Roland Pertwee; "Priscilla and the Profligate," by Michael Farraday; "Who Is

Mary?" by J. L. Campbell, and "The Jury of Fate," by the late C. M. S. McClellan, author of two such widely divergent works as "The Belle of New York," for Edna May, and "Leah Kleschna," for Mrs. Fiske. "The Jury of Fate" was produced at the London Shaftesbury as far back as 1906, and has all this while eluded export to New York.

The foregoing list, you will note, foots



ANN PENNINGTON, LEADING LADY WITH GEORGE WHITE IN HIS "SCANDALS OF 1919"

From a photograph—Copyrighted by the Hixon-Connelly Studio, Kansas City



RUTH MACTAMMANY, SINGING THE TITLE-RÔLE IN "THE LADY IN RED," ONE OF THE MANY SUMMER MUSICAL SHOWS IN NEW YORK

From a photograph by White, New York

up ten productions from the other side alone that Mr. Woods has promised to do in the coming year, and I have purposely omitted two or three to be on the safer side. Last season, all told, he did only eight new ones on Broadway, all American except "Under Orders"; but he is promising us twenty-one in all for 1919-1920. Suppose all these twenty-one were to play Broadway at once, they would occupy almost half the theaters in that theater-ridden district—only two of which, the Eltinge and the Republic, are under Mr. Woods's direct control; so you may guess the size of the grain of salt with which you must take such a forecast.

It seems likely, however, that we shall get a novelty already tried out, "Look and Listen," by Ralph E. Dyer, a Spokane newspaperman, the title being explained by the fact that some scenes are acted in pantomime, while others are played in darkness, so that what goes on can only be taken in by the ear. If the late George Edwardes had had something of this sort on tap, he need not have dismissed the audience at his Daly's Theater in London one night when the asbestos fire-curtain, having been lowered according to law at the end of a certain musical comedy's first act, could not be raised again owing to a sudden failure of the mechanism. An eleventh-hour announcement brings Willard Mack into the piece, with the title changed to "A Voice in the Dark."

Pauline Frederick, who deserted Mr. Woods for bigger pay in the movies four years ago, while acting in "Innocent," will return to him at an increased salary as a star in "Lady Tony," written by her husband, Willard Mack. The new attraction will be seen at either the Eltinge or the Republic on Labor Day, the other house probably falling to Marjorie Rambeau in her new vehicle, "The Pearl of Great Price," by Robert McLaughlin, author of "The Eternal Magdalene." As I go to press, however, I find Miss Rambeau committed to "The Unknown Woman," by two absolute newcomers in the writing game—Marjorie Blaine and Stanley Lewis.

Another Woods star will be Barney Bernard, the inimitable *Abe*. As his vehicle will be written by Montague Glass and Jules Eckert Goodman, it is fair to suppose that it will prove an addition to the famous "Potash & Perlmutter" series.

In the farce line—Mr. Woods's long suit these days, as melodrama used to be in

the old ones—you may expect "Breakfast in Bed," from the French, with Florence Moore, of "Parlor, Bedroom, and Bath"; "Not To-Night, Josephine," by Wilson Collison and Avery Hopwood, with John Cumberland of unforgettable "Fair and Warmer" memories; "Ready to Occupy," by Otto Harbach and Edgar Franklin; and "Three in One," by two new hands at the game, Edward H. Griffith and Jean Burrows.

Specializing on rooms as he does, it is not surprising that Mr. Woods eagerly snapped up Channing Pollock's title, and commissioned him to write a melodrama to fit "A Room at the Ritz." Samuel Shipman, coauthor of "Friendly Enemies," who has come to be known as the speed playwright, has whipped out "Ninety Days After Date," which may be seen before that time expires under the Woods banner.

Mr. Shipman, who is a native New Yorker and grew up on the East Side, is only thirty-four, and last season he had a hand in writing three of the pronounced hits—"Friendly Enemies," with Aaron Hoffman; "East Is West," with John B. Hymer; and "The Woman in Room 13," with Max Marcin. Now he has taken unto himself yet another collaborator in the person of Percival Wilde, well-known for his one-act plays, and together they have turned out "Dark Horses," which William Harris, Jr., promises to do on Broadway during the coming season, possibly at the Astor, if "East Is West" ever ceases to turn people away from that house.

"Dark Horses," under which name the play was tried out in Washington last April, has already had three titles—"First Is Last," "The Turn of the Wheel," and "Lambs Are Lions." I cannot assure you that it won't bear a fifth by the time it reaches Manhattan. The layout is rather novel, as it involves the proposal that four college graduates shall pool their earnings at the end of three years. Well-known players in the cast are Roland Young, of the Clare Kummer comedies; Curtis Cooksey, who scored a hit as the lead with Mary Ryan in "The Little Teacher"; Phoebe Foster, and Cathleen Nesbit.

From London, on the suggestion of his wife, Mr. Harris has procured a dark horse of a different shade in the shape of "Abraham Lincoln." I say dark horse because, put on last February at the Lyric, in Hammersmith, comparable to a Subway Circuit



NORMA TALMADGE, PICTURE STAR, FAMOUS FOR HER BEAUTY, WHOSE LATEST RELEASE IS
"THE WAY OF A WOMAN"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York



CONSTANCE TALMADGE, SISTER TO NORMA, WHOSE NEWEST PICTURE IS "HAPPINESS
À LA MODE"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

house in New York, this American historical play in six scenes, with fifty-four characters, has been running there with marked success ever since. It shows Lincoln's acceptance of the nomination for the Presidency, his attitude toward the secession of the Southern States, his proclamation emancipating the slaves, his generous attitude toward a defeated enemy, and his assassination. The last Lincoln play to be seen in New York was acted by Benjamin Chapin, recently deceased, who bore a startling resemblance to our first martyr President.

Apropos of London hits, it has just been announced that Henry Miller, in association with his son Gilbert and with A. L. Erlanger, will get the operatic version of Booth Tarkington's "M. Beaucaire," which, with music by André Messager, was presented at the Princess Theater on April 19. Maggie Teyte sang *Lady Mary Carlyle*, which will fall to Eleanor Painter here. As a play, "Beaucaire" was first done in New York by Richard Mansfield, in December, 1901. The piece and the star's support were the subjects of severe criticism, but Mansfield's work was acclaimed, and there was no occasion to change the bill at the Herald Square. The late Lewis Waller played the part in London, but it is an American, Marion Green, to whom it falls in the musical version. There are other Americans in the cast, but it seems to be the Messenger music that is chiefly responsible for the London triumph of a work which promises to be a really worthy addition to our coming season on Broadway.

Another happy possibility is the return of Grace George in repertory, interrupted last year for lack of suitable material. She has now found a comedy that she likes, by Frances Nordstrom, tried out first as "She Would and She Did," but rechristened "The Ruined Lady." The play being comedy and Miss George what we know her to be, you may safely conclude that this name is a case of a dog's bark being worse than its bite.

Also, in Forty-Eighth Street, at the theater of that name—for Miss George will, of course, reappear at the Playhouse—we may have "The Crimson Alibi," a thrilling detective drama by George Broadhurst, based on a tale of the same name by Octavus Roy Cohen, which ran in the *All-Story Weekly* early in the present year. As a game of guessing for the audience, this piece promises to tie up with "The Thir-

teenth Chair," one of the actors from which, Harrison Hunter, is in the cast, along with Blanche Yurka and William H. Thompson.

Without any collaborator this time, Aaron Hoffman, coauthor with Samuel Shipman of "Friendly Enemies," has written "Welcome Stranger," which Cohan & Harris have added to their string. George Sydney, whom you may remember as *Busy Izzy*, has a part after his own heart as *Isidore Solomon*, and Charles Dow Clark molds happily into *Clem Bemis*, who proposes to put the town of Great Sufferin' Falls on the map with the aid of electricity.

I scarcely credit the rumor that Cohan & Harris will serve up that best-seller of best-sellers, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," in play form. More reasonable is the report that "Queed" will be done into a comedy for Grant Mitchell, although the firm may decide to continue him in "A Prince There Was" throughout the season.

While on the subject of book plays, I may mention that John Cort will give us "Kathleen," dramatized by Earl Derr Biggers from the novel of the same name by Christopher Morley, a Philadelphia newspaperman. Two musical offerings by the three people responsible for that eightencarat hit, "Listen Lester"—Harry Cort and George E. Stoddard for the libretto, and Harold Orlob for the score—are on the Cort program. One of these, "The Moon Maiden," will have a Japanese prima donna, while the other, "Just a Minute," with one of its scenes aboard a yacht, will give Hal Skelley, of "Fiddlers Three," and other comedians abundant opportunity for the sort of fun that made "Lester" famous.

The only announcement to date from Klaw & Erlanger is that of a new comedy, "Into the Four Hundred," by Richard Barry, accepted last spring and listed for production in the autumn. The Charles Frohman Company, too, is rather backward with its plans, although it seems probable that it will give Otis Skinner a new play by Booth Tarkington, author of his "Mr. Antonio," of the season before last, which won out everywhere except on Broadway. There is a chance that Maude Adams will return to the Empire with another Barrie comedy.

A new manager is to enter the field—in fact, has entered it already in Chicago, where William A. Page presented Willette Kershaw in "Peggy, Behave," written by



ESTELLE WINWOOD, LEADING WOMAN WITH HENRY MILLER IN "MOLIÈRE," WHICH HE IS PLAYING FOR THE SUMMER ON THE PACIFIC COAST

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

Owen Davis, who, it would seem, is seeking to snatch the industry belt from Jerome Kern.

I have just had a chat with George Tyler regarding his 1919-1920 projected offerings for Broadway. He tells me that they are

five, in this order—"On the Hiring Line," with Emily Stevens, the play written by Harvey J. O'Higgins and Harriet Ford, whose last collaboration, if I mistake not, was on "Polygamy"; "Made of Money," by R. C. Child and Porter Emerson Brown,

with Lynne Fontanne, the English player who made such a hit with Laurette Taylor a couple of seasons ago; "A Young Man's Fancy," by John T. McIntyre, a Philadelphia writer of detective stories; "Clarence," by Booth Tarkington, with Helen Hayes, the little girl who walked away with chief honors in "Dear Brutus"; and "The Golden Age," first called "The Blossoming of Mary Anne," by Sidney Toler and Marion Short. Miss Hayes is in mind for both these last named. She gets whichever of the two pans out a winner on the summer try-out.

George Arliss holds out two possibilities—one continuing him in his historical impersonations, as *Voltaire*, in a play of that name by George Gibbs and Laurence Dudley; the other a dramatization of the exceedingly modern story of hectic Manhattan by Louis Joseph Vance, now running in this magazine—"Beau Revel."

Anybody with good unused names for theaters in mind might gratify the Selwyns by passing them on to that firm, builders of the two new houses to fill the aching void on Forty-Second Street west of the Lyric. To occupy these they have Eugene Walter's "The Challenge," with Holbrook Blinn, and "Wedding Bells," by Salisbury Field, with a capital part for Margaret Lawrence, who proved herself such a favorite in the nine-month Manhattan run of "Tea for Three."

OPERATIC PLANS

Both the Metropolitan and the Chicago opera companies each announce two novelties for the season, one of the two in each case being by an American composer—for the Metropolitan a production based on Théophile Gautier's "One of Cleopatra's Nights," by Henry Hadley, and for the Chicago forces a score by Reginald De-Koven on Percy Mackaye's "Rip Van Winkle" libretto. The Metropolitan will likewise give us a musicalized "Bluebeard," by Wolff, a Frenchman, while the other Chicago novelty will be "La Nave," by Italo Montemezzi, composer of the Metropolitan's hit, "L'Amore dei Tre Re."

Oscar Hammerstein's ten-year agreement with the Metropolitan not to produce grand opera in New York within that period rounds itself out next January. He is preparing all kinds of a big comeback, it is rumored, but to date there is nothing definite in which to stick a pin. The Ameri-

can Singers will resume operations at the Park Theater, with revivals of Gilbert and Sullivan as their best bet, although they also promise reproductions of "The Geisha" and of Sousa's "El Capitan." Andreas Dippel's announced novelty is not a new opera, but "Mme. Butterfly," sung by an all-Japanese cast.

ONE OF THE SUMMER SHOWS

Among the new shows produced too late for notice in the July number, "La-La-Lucille" seems likely to last, if the laughter of the audience be any criterion of success. Classed as a farce with music, the book is by Fred Jackson, author of "The Velvet Lady" and "The Naughty Wife"—which latter is now in the second year of its London run. The music is by George Gershwin, a new name to Broadway, but one which will be seen on the programs again, judging from the applause that goes to a tinkly number, "Tee Oodle Um Bum Bo"—nothing to write home about, perhaps, in the way of musicianly achievement, but the sort of thing which piles up the royalties, owing to the present-day public's sheer delight in jazz.

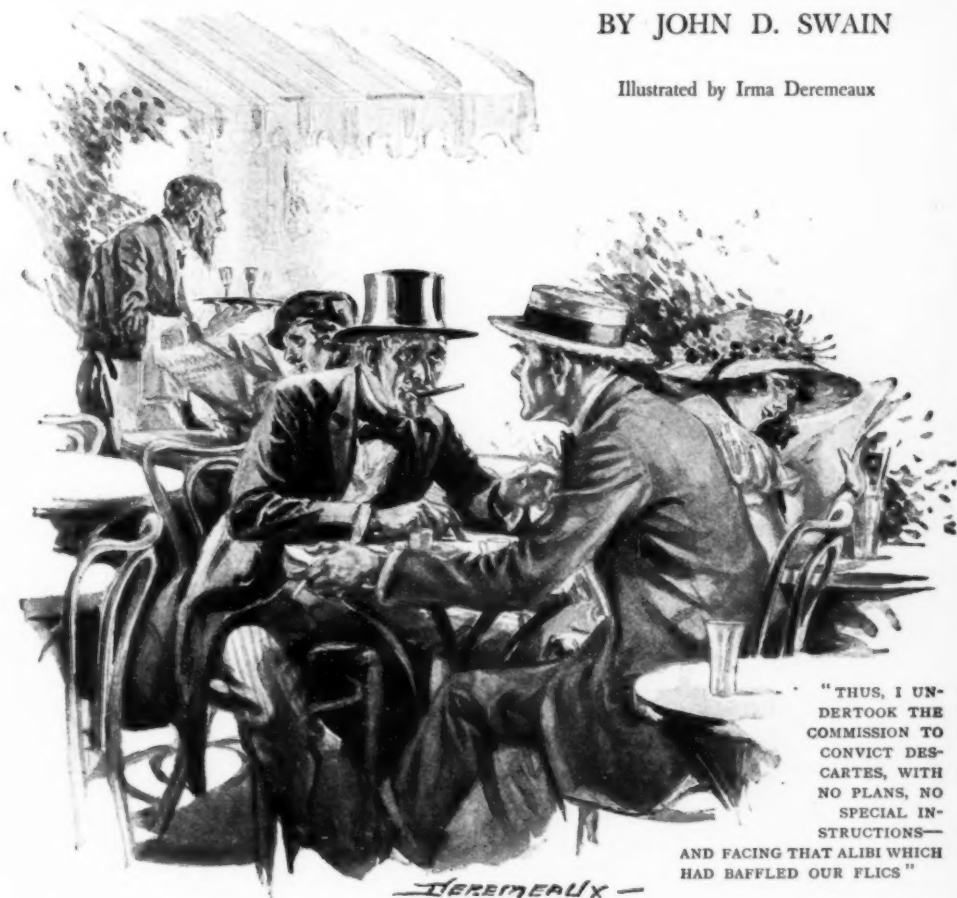
Janet Velie, in "The Kiss Burglar" last year, appears as the daughter of an juggler, married to a dentist without patients, but with vast expectations from a wealthy aunt, who announces, however, that she will leave him nothing unless he divorces his bride, the grievance being that the girl once wore trousers and juggled with her father on the stage. John E. Hazzard is the dentist, and is almost as funny as he was in "The Girl Behind the Gun"—which, by the bye, has just been brought out in London as "Kissing Time."

"La-La-Lucille" can boast a clever set of young lovers in Helen Clark, formerly of the Princess Theater musical plays, and Lorin Raker, a juvenile who reminds one of Ernest Truex. There is also a good-looking, long-limbed young fellow, a recent promotion from the Klaw & Erlanger chorus, who, on tour, played the parts of all the male principals in "The Girl Behind the Gun." He is not yet twenty; his name is John Lowe; he's a good dancer; and if he isn't spoiled by nature's kindness to him, I predict he will become another Donald Brian. Lorin Raker, by the way, was seen in town briefly last winter as *Buddy Hicks* with Marie Cahill in her luckless, "Just Around the Corner."

The Fascination of Guilt

BY JOHN D. SWAIN

Illustrated by Irma Deremeaux



"THUS, I UNDERTOOK THE COMMISSION TO CONVICT DESCARTES, WITH NO PLANS, NO SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS—

AND FACING THAT ALIBI WHICH HAD BAFFLED OUR FLICS"

"DO criminals feel remorse?"

My friend, Arnault Lapierre, of the Paris police, repeated the question I asked him as we sipped our black coffee at a little marble-topped table on the Boul' Miché.

"Gratitude is said to be the lively sense of favors to come," he went on. "If we define remorse as a lively sense of retribution to follow—in this world or the next—why, then, yes; every criminal, excepting only moral idiots, does suffer from it. Not when things are going right—when their stratagems are succeeding, and youth and passion and money and glory are their bed-fellows—but when nemesis tracks them down."

For some moments we observed in silence the endless procession which flowed past at our elbows—students, workmen, street urchins, professors of the Sorbonne, tourists. Suddenly Lapierre resumed.

"I am reminded," the old detective muttered absent-mindedly, "of the case of Félicien Descartes."

It was almost unprecedented for him to introduce the topic of his own activities. Usually I was obliged to angle with considerable ingenuity, trying out all sorts of lures, and I was not always successful at that. To Lapierre, who utterly lacked the subjective view-point, a case, whether his own or not, was of interest solely as it illumined an abstruse phase of human nature.

I stealthily refilled the tiny coffee-cups and waited.

Lapierre smiled whimsically.

"Consider, then! Papa Lapierre"—it was the custom of the man to refer to himself in the third person—"requires but little to make him happy. He is like an old dog, content with a sunny corner, a bone, and a few not too aggressive fleas. He spends his time with some idle good-for-naught like yourself, his world a little marble-topped table. He is forgotten. At the prefecture he is but a tradition to the keen young bloodhounds of the law.

"Lapierre?" they say. 'Ah, yes, to be sure! The old one who was concerned with *l'affaire Roquelaure*—or was it the *Pelletier* case?'

"Then, one day, there comes to invade his moribund tranquillity, to trample down the modest violets blooming upon his grave, a messenger. The prefect must see him—and at once! He sighs, comes back with a start to the realities, and finds himself once again entering that heavy archway off the Place Notre Dame, his steps echoing down the long granite corridors to the big room in which, as if in some previous existence, he has sat so many times before.

"Always it is the same. *Monsieur* the prefect greets Lapierre amiably, almost affectionately. He offers him one of his incredible cigars—fat, oily, full of the tropic sunshine, the rich, black loam and steaming vapors of Cuba, with a gold-and-vermilion band symbolizing the blood and treasure of old Spain.

"They light their cigars; Lapierre, not because he desires to do so; ah, no!—but because it is a manifest sin not to smoke a cigar costing two francs. For the rest, he will eat no luncheon that day; his old legs will wobble, his eyes will play him tricks.

"They chat of little nothings, gradually enveloping themselves in a thick and impenetrable cloud, like cuttlefish. And in due time, from the prefect's cloud, a voice issues and tells Lapierre that *Félicien Descartes* has killed the beautiful woman he loved, and that justice must be done upon him.

"Yes, *Descartes* killed her—no doubt of that; and the intelligent agents have done their best; but clever *Descartes* had an alibi that the Holy Office itself could not have shaken.

"Lapierre asks the usual idle questions, because he is so stupefied by the aroma, the

essential oils of his half-consumed cigar, that it is physically impossible that he should rise at this time. *Descartes*, then; had he no little weaknesses? Drink? Yes, *Descartes* drank; but, unfortunately, the more he imbibed, the more he shut up like the prudent clam. Women, then? He had avoided them since his crime. He had become, in fact, almost a woman-hater.

"The *dossier* is produced, the facts discussed. A *crime passionnel*, my friend; in some ways the most difficult of all, in others the simplest. Simple, because the great elemental impulses are alone involved; complex, because the assassin is at the time not himself. Swayed by blind rage or jealousy, strangely mingled with a terrible love, he does not act according to his normal character.

"At length that appalling cigar has burned down to its nicotin-soaked butt. Lapierre reverently lays it aside, its firm, crisp ash unbroken, and essays to depart. At need he can press the button which will set in motion the stupendous and well-oiled mechanism of the Paris police system, the finest in the world. Outside in the corridor he pauses to light one of his own thin black cigars—as an antidote to that terrible Havana of the prefect's.

"Thus, my old one, I undertook the commission to convict *Félicien Descartes*," said Lapierre, speaking of himself now in the first person. "With no plan, no special instructions, only the bare details—and facing that alibi which had baffled our *flics*. And what think you I did, first of all?"

I shook my head.

II

"I VISITED the small apartment where had lived *Céleste Nivelles*, and where she had so dreadfully died," the old detective resumed after a pause. "Our agents, my friend, are of an intelligence. One may rely upon them! And so it was that I knew the room would have been left by them in the precise condition in which they found it. Where a chair had fallen, there it would lie. Where blood bespattered the walls, no hand would have washed it clean. They had simply locked and sealed the door and gone away.

"It was mid-afternoon when I found myself in front of the block on the Boulevard Haussmann, fronting a new park, in which *Céleste Nivelles* had been installed.

Her suite was in the *entresol*, consisting of a pleasant salon overlooking the park, a bedchamber, and an immaculate kitchenette. Her maid, Lilas, did not sleep on the premises, but came each morning to prepare her mistress's coffee, fetching with her a basket of white rolls from the bakery.

"The sunlight flooded through the windows of the salon when I raised the Venetian blinds, after closing and locking the door. It was within this room that the girl had been slashed to ribbons by her infuriated lover, for no reason which the police were able to discover. The maid, Lilas, insisted that there was no other man involved, and that nothing beyond the usual lovers' tiffs had ever marred their

life. She may have been keeping something back, but after scouring the resorts and interrogating the gay irresponsibles amid whom they passed their time, no light was thrown upon the motive for the crime; nor did a methodical search of their effects add anything. As to the reasons for definitely identifying Descartes as the assassin, even I, Lapiere, did not know; I was satisfied, as always, to accept the word of the prefect and trust the efficiency of our



"I WAS ROUSED BY ONE OF THOSE CURIOUS HAPPENINGS WHICH ARE SO EAGERLY SEIZED UPON BY THE SUPERSTITIOUS. A BROWN CUCKOO EMERGED FROM A SWISS CLOCK TO ANNOUNCE THE HOUR"

agents. It was my part to connect Descartes with the murder.

"I walked about the room, letting its atmosphere sink in. Nothing, as I have told you, had been disturbed. At this very moment the sun was caressing a warm-toned etching of a 'Weeping Magdalen,' hanging over Céleste's writing-cabinet. The walls were papered in dull gold, figured with tulips of a deeper tone. There were a dozen good pictures on them as well as an antique mirror with brass sconces. In the sconces stood cream-colored wax candles which had never been lighted. The woodwork was enameled in ivory tones; a beautiful buff rug some three yards square, with a contrasting Persian-blue figure, a great hanging lamp of copper with a shade of amber glass, and draperies of pale-lemon silk, maintained the key in which the color-scheme had been pitched by some clever decorator, or, possibly, by *mademoiselle* herself.

"The rug was rumpled and stained with blood. So also was the wall, at one side; and here was the print of a small hand, in blood, the tapering fingers outspread, the clearness of the impression indicating that it had been flung out forcibly, seeking support. I took note of every detail; for"—Lapierre smiled—"though I am so absent-minded that my pockets have been picked and that I offend my good friends by passing them on the street without recognition, I am also on occasion one whom nothing whatever escapes."

I had been told that once Lapierre, elaborately arrayed, sat at such a table as the one across which we were talking now, absorbed in his reveries, and that, chancing to observe a little procession passing by, and idly inquiring of the waiter what might be its occasion, he was told that it was the wedding-party of a famous detective, Lapierre, who was taking to himself a bride in the near-by church of St. Augustin. As a matter of fact, the little party was returning from the church, the groom having failed to materialize!

That was the nearest Lapierre ever came to matrimony. Yet this man, when he chose to concentrate, as on one of his cases, became an implacable mind, coldly and infallibly sifting the evidence brought to him by senses which missed nothing. At such times even his power of smell seemed to become like that of a feral creature.

"Irrelevant details?" he had once remarked. "There are none!"

"Alone within this still room, the scene of much former joyousness, I discarded my personality as a man discards his coat," he continued. "I became Félicien Descartes, moved by blinding passion. I leaped upon the lovely girl about whom my world had been constructed; I rejoiced to feel the soft flesh yield to my iron fingers and to behold the widening pupils of the anguished eyes she turned upon me. I felt as Félicien felt when the soul of her drained off through many cruel gashes!

"Reason crept back, and I made my plans to escape. Had any one heard our struggle? Was my face marked? Should I leave at once, or wait till dark? For—the police said—it was at about this hour that Céleste met her death.

"Again, I put myself in the place of the girl. In her place? Nay, I *was* the girl! Young, beautiful, amorous, living a sheltered and perfumed existence, at twenty-two I looked into the grinning face of Death, and knew that I must leave it all; that in five minutes—or three—I should be a thing to shudder at, even as I had often shrunk from a dead cat lying in the gutter. Desperately I struggled to avert this horror, this unprepared-for call to yield my tender body and my greedy youth!

"Do you believe, as I sometimes do, that even to inanimate things there attaches an impalpable essence of the personalities which have been associated with them? In a corner of that room was a broken *chaise longue*—a lovely thing of marquetry which had once belonged to the Pompadour, and had for generations passed from hand to hand, always associated with love and kisses. It had come to ruin, fittingly enough; for upon it were found the poor crumpled lace and blood, the cold, white flesh and wide, terrified eyes that had been Céleste Nivelles.

"Laugh, I pray you, if it please you; I shall take no offense; but"—Lapierre leaned over the table, his gaze fixed upon me, and continued his narrative in a whisper—"I became that pretty toy, that broken *chaise longue*. I felt upon my cunningly inlaid fabric the devastating impact of the victim of Descartes. Her blood soaked into my dainty brocade. We perished together!

III

"I WAS roused by one of those curious happenings which are so eagerly seized upon

by the superstitious. Upon the mantel stood a foolish little Swiss clock—one of those from whose rustic interior a brown cuckoo emerges to announce the hour. Suddenly—jarred, as I believe, by a heavy truck which rumbled past—the flimsy door of the clock opened, and the tiny inmate crept forth with a dry rustle. Half-way out it stopped and opened its beak, but uttered no sound. After a moment it withdrew, and the door closed after it. The mechanism had run down, save for this final modicum of energy, set in action by the jarring; but the effect was precisely as if the futile toy had tried to convey some message. Imbued as I was with the tragedy upon which I had been concentrating, and taking place in the fast-gathering dusk, the effect was weird and even sinister.”

Lapierre paused and sighed. He lighted one of his thin cigars.

“When I left that room I knew it as if I had lived within it for years. The other rooms, the chamber and the kitchenette, I merely glanced over. And the following day I set to work to reconstruct that little salon. Not, you understand, to repair it, nor to put it approximately where it was when, upon that fatal afternoon, Félicien Descartes entered it for the last time; but to put it *exactly* as it then was.

“First of all, there was a roll of paper to be replaced. With some trouble I found the decorator from whom it had been purchased years before; but when matched it proved a little brighter than that which had hung there so long. The difference was slight, it is true; but when Descartes entered the reconstructed room his eyes would unerringly be led to that very section and might note its lighter hue. Therefore, the entire room must be repapered.

“This was not so simple; for there was but a single roll of that pattern left in stock, and none had been printed for several years. To arrange to have a special lot made up from the old blocks, most fortunately preserved, entailed time and trouble; and when the job was done it proved as expensive as if the room had been draped with damask.

“Next, there was the matter of the *chaise longue*. It might be repaired, but never so that a close inspection would not have revealed the patchwork. Again, this was a thing which would be certain to draw Descartes’s gaze with a terrible fascination. So, the best maker of antique cabinets in

Paris was employed to construct an exact duplicate—exact, you understand, to the very dents and scratches of the original, including a fragment of missing ebony in the inlay.

“The rug yielded readily to the naphtha process. Presently, then, the salon stood precisely as upon that day when its dainty interior was desecrated by so terrible a storm of passion and crime.

“After all, it was a cat which proved more troublesome than all else together—a huge yellow animal answering to the name of Henrique. I assure you that before I found one that satisfied the critical eyes of Lilas, who was by now in my pay, I knew half the animal-shops in Paris! I was a connoisseur in the indescribable odors, the raucous cries, the forlorn attempts to make friends, of every species of pet which can exist in our climate. And when we finally selected a cat, he was not perfect; he had a long tail—a plume of magnificence, which he managed with dignity and grace. Poor Henrique, who had fled from the death-scene of his mistress, and had never returned, was bobtailed, a genuine Manx. We sacrificed all but two inches of our cat’s tail, and when his feelings were somewhat assuaged, Lilas undertook to teach him his new name. Many times a day would she call, ‘Henrique! Come thou here, *mon enfant!*’ and offer him the reward of a scrap of raw kidney; till at length he accepted his new name and came running whenever he was called.

“Now, having done all that pains and ingenuity could suggest to restore old conditions, I took a little vacation and buried myself in an old Norman seaport for a week or two. I wished to meditate in its dull and sleepy air. Also, Félicien Descartes was a Norman. He possessed the shrewdness of the peasant, overlaid with the sophistication of the city; not an easy character to penetrate, you will perceive. Among his sort of folk, I felt that I could study to advantage the instincts which move them; for all Normans run pretty true to type. Were they superstitious? Religious? Brave? Stolid? I purposed to see for myself.

“I had no routine work to do, no reports to hand in, no colloquies with my superior. As you know, my friend, I work along individual lines, unhampered by the official red tape of my confrères. I might have ended my days in this old seaport of the

Conqueror, and no one would have interfered; but in ten days I was back in Paris. We soon yearn for the boulevards, we true Parisians, and our own little table on the *pavé*! Besides, my plan was by now matured.

"Lest you should think that I am boastful, let me say that I should have failed, or at least that this plan would have had to be abandoned, but for the cooperation of a most remarkable woman.

unfolded my plan. She was *femme exquisite*, lovely like her sister, though a year or two older. Indeed, when the hair-dresser and modiste had done with her she was Céleste



"HE TURNED A DREADFUL VISAGE UPON ME, AND, WITHOUT SPEAKING, POINTED TO THE GIRL, WHO HAD RISEN AND WAS STARING DOWN AT HIM WITH A GLOATING FEROCITY"

"*Monsieur*, in all the world there is nothing so implacable as a wronged woman. A man may feel a fiercer rage at the moment; but he is turned from his purpose by many things. A woman never forgets!

"It was Julie, the sister of the dead Céleste, to whom I went for assistance and

herself, so Lilas admitted. I, of course, had never seen the murdered woman.

"There was one *etail* lacking; and it was in supplying this that Julie proved the depth of her hatred for Descartes. Conceive a really beautiful woman who will permit a surgeon to mar her face with a

scar! For Céleste had borne one across her right cheek, the result of an accident in girlhood; not, to be sure, very noticeable, but nevertheless a blemish. So Julie must needs be cut, and healed; and even then she would have no assurance that it would be of any utility. Yet, merely on the chance that it might help bring to justice this man upon whom she had never set eyes, she submitted willingly and even joyously to the little operation, performed by one of our discreet police surgeons. Then, under Lilas's tuition, since she had seen her sister but rarely during the past few years, she studied the dead Céleste's tricks of voice and gesture, hummed her favorite ballads, worked like a true *artiste* perfecting herself in an important rôle.

"Meanwhile, I had seen Félicien Descartes once or twice and one of our agents had kept him under surveillance. The agent, posing as rather a dull fellow addicted to liquor, had easily enough made and held his acquaintance. I had observed him across a café, or from a theater gallery, but with far less attention than I customarily bestow. I had read the reports, and felt that I knew as much as I needed to know about this thick-bodied, square-headed, rather surly young fellow, who was drinking steadily, never retiring until dawn stained the sky, who neglected his meals for long periods and then ate voraciously. He was not happy, this man; but he held an iron grip upon himself, and never did his tongue prove an unruly member.

IV

"At length, all being in readiness, I passed the word to the agent. A long evening of drinking, that Félicien Descartes might arrive at that state where a clear memory of the past few hours was beyond probability; and then, in the last glass, the pinch of powder carried by our agent."

Again Lapierre paused, his head sunk forward, his thin black cigar drooping from his lips. He sighed and looked up.

"Félicien Descartes awakened in the room of which every detail must have been burned into his memory. Save for the bed in which he lay, which had been moved from the adjoining chamber, all was as he knew it before the tragedy.

"About his forehead was bound a thick linen bandage. His head ached splittingly; he tried vainly to recall what had happened to him.

"By his side, solicitude in her eyes, a smile of love and sympathy upon her lips, sat a beautiful girl, busy about some glasses and vials upon the little stand which was by the bed. The man's lips noiselessly formed the word 'Céleste.'

"The girl leaned over him, placing a cool hand upon his cheek. At that instant, from the door leading to the hall, there entered, with brisk, professional air, a man bearing a physician's bag, who advanced to the bedside. It was I—Lapierre, 'doctor despite himself,' is it not?

"'Oh, doctor, I think he is better! There is a different look in his eyes!' the girl cried, tears rising to her eyes.

"'Well, well!' I replied, bending over the patient. 'We shall see what we shall see!' I opened my bag—a very proper bag, borrowed from the police surgeon, and packed with all manner of things the use of which I could but conjecture.

"I found what I was after—a little oral thermometer, which I thrust, with an air, into my patient's mouth. After a moment I withdrew and frowningly observed it.

"'You have reason, *madame*,' I reassured her. 'The fever has abated itself. The crisis is passed. I can promise you that your husband will live!'

"I could indeed have told almost precisely how long he would live!

"Hungriily, Descartes scanned the features of the girl bending above him. He could not, you understand, see too clearly—a drop or so of atropin had arranged that while he slept. He raised his hand to her face. His fingers sought—and found—the tiny scar upon it.

"The girl endured his touch without flinching; but she gently raised her head and called, 'Oh, Henrique! Come and see the master!' There entered, from the left rear, and quite theatrically, the great yellow cat, who sat expectantly at her feet, licking his chops. But there was no delectable morsel of kidney to-day! Poor Henrique had played out his little part.

"The eyes of Descartes passed from object to object in the room; first, to that part of the wall where had been the bloody print of the little hand, then over the clean rug, to finger upon the *chaise longue*. From its cage emerged the tiny brown bird. 'Cocul!' it chirped, nine times, and retired.

"'Eh bien! Qu'est-ce que tu nous chantes? What tune singest thou?' muttered Descartes.

"I took out a pad of prescription-blanks and began to write—not remedies, however, but in shorthand, everything that Descartes said.

"You have been so very, very ill, *p'tit maître!*" crooned the girl. "One feared you would have died. A fall, we suppose; or possibly a blow. Strangers left you at our door unconscious. This was ten long days ago!"

"A cunning look flickered across the man's heavy features.

"Let me then see the newspaper," he said.

"The girl called aloud: '*Lilas, les nouvelles du jour!*'"

"Lilas entered, curtsied to her master, and showed her white teeth. In her hand she bore a fresh newspaper of the tenth day after Céleste Nivelles's murder. Descartes seized it and managed to focus his eyes upon it to read the date.

"Name of God, but I have had a most ghastly dream!" Once more he fastened his eyes upon the girl's features.

"Yes—yes—we know," she soothed him. "You were in a delirium; but you must forget it now and not exert yourself to talk."

"Descartes stirred restlessly. His great hands plucked at the silk coverlet. 'I thought I had killed you, Céleste, *chérie!*' he whispered.

"The girl laughed softly. 'I am not so easily handled! Me, I am of a strength and suppleness.'

"*Dieu*, do I not know it? I thought—in my dream—that you would never die!"

"*Mais, mon choux*, silly one that thou art, who wouldst not harm poor Henrique here, why shouldst thou kill me, even in a dream?"

"He wagged his head upon its pillow. Oh—the usual stupid lovers' quarrel; beginning with nothing and ending in blood—blood everywhere! I had been drinking—naturally—" He paused, closing his eyes. After a moment he went on: "It was so real—so horribly real! Each detail! Not like any dream I ever had before. I thought I was damned! And now—now I can enter a church, and the fumes of incense will not strangle me! I can kneel before God—and, sinner as I am, He will not smite me dead for sacrilege!"

"The girl patted his hand, as one humoring a child. 'And they condemned you to death, *mon brave*, in your dream?"

"No! No! I was too clever for them; even in my dream I was not to be trapped. I sold my big ring to old Baltasar, the Jew, and gave the money to crooked Maître Richard to buy me an alibi—"

"He stopped abruptly and gazed at his hands, spread before him on the soft coverlet. '*Où donc?* Where is it—my diamond?' His voice sounded harsh and flat.

"The girl hesitated. Of course I had a reply ready in case he had noticed at first that the big yellow stone he always wore upon his middle finger was missing; but now it could make no difference. In the relief from the terrible mental strain under which he had held himself taut during all these weeks, he had told me more than I had dared to hope for.

"I stepped forward, at the same time beckoning to two agents who were waiting within the inner chamber.

"Old Baltasar shall recover it for us, *monsieur*," I said.

"He turned a dreadful visage upon me, and, without speaking, pointed to the girl, who had risen and was staring down at him with a gloating ferocity.

"Mlle. Julie, the sister of the late Céleste Nivelles!" I explained."

V

THE boulevard tide was running strong now. Newsboys, senators, manikins, *chômeurs*, bards of the cellar cabarets, dowdy Englishwomen with netted hair, sleek clerics—for a minute or two we watched it all in silence.

"I, Lapiere," he resumed, "am hardened to much that is sinister and sad; yet I tell you that what I beheld in the face of Félicien Descartes I would gladly forget. Fear? Rage? Hatred? None of these! But if you can picture a man who has been in hell, and who thinks he has made good his escape from that abode of lost souls, and who, at the last portal, the outer gate, is plucked back and damned to all eternity, you would see in his eyes what I unwillingly beheld in those of Descartes."

"But what did he say?" I asked.

"Say? Nothing at all. He turned his face from us to the wall, with its golden sheen broken by clusters of tulips."

"But afterward?" I persisted.

"Nor afterward. From that moment until his neck went under the blade of the merciful and ingenious Dr. Guillotine, no word, no syllable, ever passed his lips!"

Good-by Forever

BY ROBERT SHANNON

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

THE middle-aged man lighted a fragrant cigar and addressed the youth.

They were standing bareheaded on the porch of the boarding-house, enjoying the soft, warm air after the six-o'clock dinner in the stuffy dining-room.

"There are great opportunities in a small town like this, Charlie, for a young chap like you," he said. "Stick on the job, keep your eyes open, and when the big chance comes—"

Charlie Gozie interrupted with the wisdom of his twenty-two years.

"Just as big opportunities here for a man of your age, too," he remarked sagely. "It's the best town in the State."

The elder shook his head.

"I kicked my opportunity away when I was about your age. It never returned."

"Shucks, you don't believe that," Charlie said, with a note of consolation in his voice. "Why, a man's always got a chance."

A pair of eyes that had seen much of the wide world regarded him with seriousness and a hint of amusement.

"Listen, my boy, to what an American statesman wrote about 'Opportunity':

"Master of human destinies am I!
Fame, love, and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and, passing by
Hovel and mart and palace, soon or late
I knock, unbidden, once at every gate.
If feasting, rise; if sleeping, wake before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe
Save death. But those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury, and woe,
Seek me in vain and ceaselessly implore;
I answer not, and I return no more!"

Charlie Gozie drank the poem in as if his soul had thirsted for it. His face shone with high resolve suddenly inspired.

"Wait till I get a piece of paper," he said

breathlessly. "That's wonderful! I want to copy it down."

II

"THEN you don't love me!" It was an explosive accusation charged with thwarted desire.

"I do, too," the girl parried.

She was a slight young thing, almost fragile, but there was a gleam of combativeness in her deep-blue eyes.

"Then you've got to marry me right away," he said solemnly. "*'It is the hour of fate.'*"

The girl's soft lips tightened angrily for a moment.

"Don't start on that poem again, Charlie Gozie," she warned. "I don't care what your ideas on opportunity are in a business way, but I won't marry you before September, as we agreed. There is no earthly reason—"

He turned from her with a toss of his head. He bespoke his renunciation with a swagger of his shoulders. At the door he swagged with his hand on the knob.

"Then," he said with an air of finality, "good-by—good-by forever!"

His chin was set firmly, and there was determination in his usually mild blue eyes. He held the pose for a moment, as if he expected to be summoned back.

Another moment passed; then a number of them. He twisted the knob slowly. Still she did not repent.

His glance roved the small parlor, with its familiar settee of yellow plush, the center-table with the album, Pharaoh's horses on the wall, the family portraits in crayon. The girl was twisting a ring from her finger.

"Here it is," she said, with a surprising lack of emotion in her voice.

Perhaps it is an age-old instinct that impels the captive heart to strain the leash



"SEEK ME IN VAIN AND
CEASELESSLY IMPIRE; I
ANSWER NOT, AND I RETURN
—NO MORE"

that holds it; or perhaps Charlie had confused business with romance, and was reaping a reward of feminine resentment. Who can say? The woman, least of all.

Charlie's eyes widened a bit.

"No, May," he protested almost tenderly. "I don't want the ring back. You keep it."

Quite casually she transferred it to her right hand.

"All right," she said. "Good-by!"

"No—you keep that to remember me by, May. It's a good ring. When I bought it for you I got the best. It set me

back fifty bucks, but no amount of money ever counted when you were concerned. In them days—"

"Very well. Good-by!"

"Now look here, May," he said, taking his hand from the door and moving toward her. "Let's have no misunderstanding."

May made a show of stifling a yawn.

"There isn't," she assured him. "You said it yourself—good-by forever!"

A quick red surge mounted Charlie's clear-skinned face.

"Just remember this," he said tensely: "*Seek me in vain and ceaselessly implore; I answer not, and I return—no more.*"

Two quick strides took him again to the door. His nervous hand had it half open before he turned back hesitatingly.

"Listen, May—it doesn't matter now, but I want you to know that I was thinking of your interest when I wanted to hurry up our marriage. A man's got twice as much opportunity to get ahead in this world if he's married. It's a big advantage to start young. Look at all our successful men. They're married, ain't they?"

A wisp of a cold smile came to her lips.

"Good-by, Charlie," she said.

But Charlie promptly closed the door and returned.

"Now—now I don't want to leave you with any hard feelings," he explained. "I don't want to leave you while you're in hasty anger."

"I'm not angry," she said deliberately.

"Yes, you are, May. You're angry because I'm ambitious and want to get settled and go up in the world. Opportunity knocks only once at every gate. I'm going to be foreman of that sash-and-door factory just as sure as—"

She was a little package of feminine concentrated will-power.

"And you want to bully me into marrying you before I'm ready," she remarked icily. "I won't be bullied. You said good-by—and that ends it. Good night!"

Conciliation changed to ferocity.

"All right, then—good night!"

Again he was at the door, but a sinking sensation arrested him. Again he paused, his broad shoulders bent. He would give her a final chance.

"You mean that?"

"I do."

"And it's all over?"

"It is."

Slowly his hand came to the door-knob. Charlie Gozie, as young men go, had the usual amount of courage, but he suddenly felt robbed of the power of decisive action.

"Oh, look here, May," he began.

"I thought you said you were going," May taunted sweetly. "Haven't you the nerve?"

"Nerve!"

He whirled away from the door and came back to her eagerly.

"Me?" he asked, tapping his chest with his strong fingers. "Nerve? Say, May,

you ought to know. Listen—I had the nerve to settle down and work steady two and a half years for you, didn't I?"

"It doesn't take much nerve to hold a job," she informed him, glancing furtively but unmistakably at the onyx clock on the mantel-shelf.

"Well, it took nerve to quit cigarettes, didn't it? When you asked me to quit, I threw away the one I was smoking, and I've never touched one since. And I ain't took a drink, either."

She conceded him nothing.

"You never did drink, anyhow."

"But I might have—only I didn't. Another thing—I used to shoot as pretty a stick of pool as any man in town, but I ain't touched a cue since I been going with you. I had nerve to give up a lot of things for you. Didn't I work hard, and wasn't I promoted from running a band-saw to shipping-clerk? Didn't I do that? Didn't I save my money, too?"

May's mind leaped to certain recollections of Charlie's frugality.

"Yes," she said distinctly, "you certainly did!"

He made a hot reply.

"Well, what if I did? It was only so we could have the things we needed later on. Didn't I invent that portable bungalow, and ain't I getting a patent on it? Didn't I tip off the owner of the mill that there was a good chance to sell fancy front doors in this town, and didn't he get orders for twenty-eight of 'em on my hunch? Didn't I get 'em to make new tools so they could turn out some new designs in wainscoting? And didn't your own old man buy eighty-two feet of it for the dining-room? Who done all them things? Charlie Gozie!"

He stepped over to the wall and tapped the base-board with his shoe.

"They used that style of woodwork twenty years in this town, till I figured out something different," he said, with the air of an expert.

May lifted a small hand in protest.

"I'm not in the sawmill business, Charlie," she said, applying the lash. "You were going, you know."

His face was that of a martyr.

"Yes, I'm going," he said. "I said I was, and I am. I'm going to leave this town. I'm going to be a big success some day, simply because I've got sense enough to seize my opportunities. If I was mar-

ried right away I might stick here and do well."

He waited expectantly—in vain.

"That poem I recited tells the story. Of course, being out in the world, I might get to drinking and go back to cigarettes and pool. If I did, I guess it wouldn't make any difference to nobody, anyhow."

Her lips opened in quick alarm, but she checked the speech that was springing to them.

"Well, good-by, May!" He stretched out his hand. "You'll shake hands, won't you?"

She placed her small, cool hand in his warm palm.

"Good-by, Charlie."

"Good-by, May!"

His grasp closed tightly for an instant; then he turned and left the room, taking his hat from the rack in the little hallway. When he was on the porch May turned the key in the front door and twisted out the hall light.

Half-way down the walk to the gate he thought of something more to say, and decided to return. He was back on the porch before he noticed that the light was extinguished. Being rather confused in his thoughts and emotions, he sat down on the steps for a moment to think.

So it was ended, was it? Of course, if she was that kind of a girl, it didn't matter a great deal after all. He didn't mind giving her up so much—it wasn't that, but he did have a sort of fondness for that porch. It wouldn't seem quite natural to spend his evenings away from there. One gets in the habit of things. Well, there was only one thing to do—clear out and forget her. A young man with brains and the common sense to take advantage of his opportunities was bound to make a success, a darned big success, if he only stuck to it.

Some day he'd come back here to Collinsville and maybe open up a factory of his own. Naturally he'd have to talk the proposition over with the bankers of the town, and—well, with all the big men. Maybe then May Witherspoon would realize just what caliber of man Charlie Gozie was.

For aught he knew he might bring his wife along. At the thought his heart seemed to shrink up into a compact, aching knot. There was a vision of May with her deep-blue eyes, her white throat, her frail little figure. He rose weakly and al-

most reeled as he went down the walk, his eyes wet with sudden unmanly tears.

III

Nor did he close them that night. The middle-aged man in the next room heard him shuffling about, heard dresser drawers creaking, and vague thumpings and rustlings. He was a light sleeper, and his rest was disturbed a dozen times.

"What under the sun were you doing all last night, Charlie?" he asked at breakfast. "You kept me awake from twelve o'clock on."

"Packing," said Charlie, dallying with a fried egg and pretending to eat. "I'm leaving town."

"You're not going to throw up your job at the factory, are you?" There was genuine apprehension in the question. "I thought you were getting along fine there. Didn't you just get raised to thirty a week?"

"It ain't the job—it's the town," Charlie said with a bluster.

Mrs. Purvis, the proprietress, paused with a tray of empty dishes bound for the kitchen.

"Maybe it's a honeymoon," she suggested, smiling knowingly.

"Nothin' like that!" Charlie disclaimed vehemently.

He rose from the table and left the room only to return early in the forenoon. The middle-aged man was comfortably rocking in the parlor and reading the city daily that had arrived on the eight fifteen. Mrs. Purvis, busy with her broom in the upper hall, halted her young boarder.

"I don't want to say anything, Charlie," she said, fishing craftily, "but I'm glad it ain't a honeymoon. Not that there's anything to be said against May Witherspoon; but you're a steady young man, and—and—"

The blackness of the scowl that met her gaze frightened her.

"And what?" Charlie demanded, his eyes burning through red lids.

"Well, I won't say her father is a drunkard or anything like that, but they do say he goes up to the city and gets on toots occasionally. Not but what some of our very best-known men do the same thing, but I just hate to see a steady young man marry into a family where drink is—as you might say—a curse."

Her fat, florid face purpled quickly at

Charlie's unexpected and unprecedented remark.

"The hell you say!"

He entered his room and slammed the door. Her virtuous indignation met no responsive sympathy as it was poured into the patient ear of the quiet reader in the parlor.

"I see the weather forecast is partly cloudy and warmer," he informed her as he turned to the market page.

He continued reading after Charlie sought him out and abruptly asked for information.

"You been in New York, ain't you?"

"Oh, yes."

"Pretty good chances there for a sober young fellow?"

"Why, yes, I suppose so." The man put down his paper. "Given up your job, have you?"

Charlie flopped himself on the couch and tried to be comfortable.

"Yes. This town is a sort of backwoods place. I'm going East. Maybe Boston—I don't know."

The middle-aged man stretched carelessly.

"I thought you liked this place," he said indifferently. "Weren't you telling me the other day that it was the coming town of the State?"

"I guess I was kiddin'," the youth alibied. "I'm a kind of a restless bird, I suppose. This is a dead place for a fellow like me. I've been stickin' around here too long as it is. I'm naturally a rover."

"Born here, weren't you?"

"Yes, I happened to be."

"Lived here most of your life?"

Charlie flushed.

"Yes, but—"

"Well, I think New York is a fine place for a young man with the right



THE MIDDLE-AGED MAN IN THE NEXT ROOM HEARD DRESSER DRAWERS CREAKING, AND VAGUE THUMPINGS AND RUSTLINGS

stuff in him," said the other with a kindly disregard of the boy's confusion. "When you figuring on leaving?"

"Maybe to-night, maybe to-morrow."

If there was something akin to despondency in the voice, it was politely ignored.

"Better wait around three or four days, Charlie. New York will always be there. You'll want to say good-by to a lot of your friends."

"I ain't got many friends here—not real ones. About the only friends I got are

down at the mill. My boss hated to see me quittin' the job."

The middle-aged man rose and shook his coat and trousers into shape. He was a tall man, gray at the temples, with large, dark eyes set in a somewhat seamy face.

"Better stay a few days longer anyway," he suggested again. "I might be able to give you a lot of helpful information about places and conditions back East."

To Charlie's anxious and worried mind it came as a plausible stay of execution.

"Sure, I'll stick around a while," he said agreeably. "I'll maybe be wanting to straighten up a few affairs."

A shrewd conjecture that had formed in the mind of the man from the East was confirmed at the noonday meal, as he watched Charlie Gozie's plate. Charlie, unmistakably, was "off his feed." Being somewhat versed in the ways of the young male, and having attained the estate of middle age, it was clear to the watcher that it was not business or *wanderlust* that was affecting the younger man.

If Charlie ate little at noon, he ate less at the evening meal. When it was over he was suddenly conscious that he had no place to go, no one to call up on the telephone, no reason to shave his cheeks to a fastidious smoothness. The thought of a motion-picture show sickened him. The ghosts of too many whispered conversations in the Alamo Nickelodeon gave him a sick thrill. No doubt the electric lights were burning brightly in the Smoke House Billiard Parlor, but—well, he was out of the habit of that sort of amusement. It is hard to be alone.

"Let's take a stroll, Charlie," the middle-aged man suggested, joining him on the porch. "I've been in Collinsville nearly three weeks now, and I haven't seen much of the town."

So they fared out, Charlie welcoming the company. The night was warm, and they loitered along in the early dusk down the main street—Charlie acting as guide—and across the little, trim court-house square, with its concrete walks winding through the grassy plots.

At the corner of Orchard Street and Wisconsin they stopped for several minutes and listened to the Central M. E. choir practicing. A girl's clear, sweet soprano voice sounded through the others with a note of true music. It fell pleasantly on the ears

of the middle-aged man, but it stabbed Charlie Gozie in the heart.

"That's a remarkably nice voice," said the stranger in town, in honest admiration. "It has, somehow, an appealing quality of cleanliness in it."

"That — that's May Witherspoon," Charlie told him with a catch in his words that was not lost upon his perceptive companion.

"May Witherspoon? Isn't that the girl I've heard you speak of several times? I'd like to meet her some time, Charlie."

"Yes, she's a fine girl," the young man admitted somewhat vaguely. "You see—you see, I don't see much of May these days. Some time when we run across her—by chance, maybe—I'll introduce her. I'll be glad to."

They moved along, and later, when they came to the Palace Drug-Store, there were a number of young people at the soda tables. At one, in particular, there were three—all girls.

"Want a soda?" Charlie asked, glancing in and halting at the door. "Come on—let's have something!"

When they were seated, and the white-jacketed young clerk had brought their frothy orders, Charlie seemed to give a start of surprise.

"Well, darned if there ain't May now!" he said, looking in the direction of the three young women, who were rising from their table to leave. "I'll introduce you."

When the girls came abreast of their table, he rose and halted Miss Witherspoon with a detaining finger. Her companions had preceded her, and, noting that she was engaged for the moment, they waited at the door.

"I want you to meet a friend of mine," Charlie said somewhat stiffly. "We happened to be passing the church this evening, and he liked the sound of your voice."

The introduction was accomplished.

"Funny how this happened," Charlie explained, as if he were denying something. "We just happened to go by the church, and then we dropped in here and ran across you. Pure coincidence—absolutely!"

He gazed at her with hungry eyes, hopefully, but May was smiling at the stranger.

"You must attend service on Sunday morning," she invited. "Brother Bedell, our minister, will be very glad to have you. I'll introduce you to him."

The middle-aged man acknowledged the invitation with a gentle smile and a suggestion of a bow.

"I'll be very glad," he said. "I'll have Mr. Gozie bring me around for the morning service."

"No," said Charlie with dramatic sternness. "I'll be far away from Collinsville by Sunday."

May smiled bewitchingly at the other.

"Oh, but you can come alone, now that you know the way. I'll expect you. Awfully glad I met you! The girls are waiting—I must go now."

She was off with a graceful little sidestep, bestowing never a word or a glance upon the heavy-hearted youngster. The dull ache in his breast was varied now, for the first time, by new and excruciating tortures, for May had never been one to make a man jealous.

"A remarkably fine young woman," the middle-aged man commented as he watched her exit.

Charlie felt no resentment at the man's admiration. It was perfectly natural—May was undeniably pretty.

"Come on!" Charlie urged restlessly. "Let's take a nice long walk. I ain't half ready to turn in yet."

IV

FOR half an hour they strolled aimlessly along the brick sidewalks of the quiet streets overhung with leafy trees, talking of business, of the East, of politics, and what not. It was after nine o'clock, and the mothers were shepherding their children onto porches and into houses.

The moon rose suddenly—a huge moon of grotesque proportions, low in the sky. It splashed Collinsville with its silvery light.

Charlie's footsteps seemed mysteriously to gain a sudden sense of direction, and he appeared to be leading the way. They came to a block of neat white houses, with flowers that blushed by day in grassy front yards and in clusters snug against front porches. Lights gleamed through the windows, and there were people rocking and talking softly as they enjoyed the calm and beauty of the night from the comfortable seclusion of their verandas.

Regulating the pace, Charlie dropped into a slower stride.

"It's beautiful along here," the middle-aged man said, almost in reverence.

"Very common neighborhood," Charlie asserted. "Twenty-five-hundred-dollar bungalows on twenty-a-month payments, mostly. Plain people."

The man was silent a moment before he answered.

"Maybe that is why it is so beautiful," he said softly.

Near the end of the block they came upon a yard in which a mass of snowball-bushes was flowering just inside the fence. A slender form stood on the porch, half-leaning against one of the columns. A slender arm encircled the support, as she contemplated the splendor of the rising moon.

"It's her!" Charlie whispered, more to himself than any one else.

"It's who?"

"May!"

"You mean Miss Witherspoon?"

"Yes, darn it!" Charlie explained apologetically. "We got to talking, and I didn't realize we were over here in her neighborhood. Now she'll think we followed her home; and you know it is nothing but coincidence."

The girl's attention was attracted to the pair. She recognized them with a second glance.

"Oh, hello!" she cried in surprise. "Isn't it a glorious night?"

Charlie was mute.

"It is indeed," the middle-aged man answered as they hesitated at the gate.

"Come on in," May urged cordially.

"Nix, nix!" Charlie muttered under his breath, but a firm grasp on his arm led him into the yard and up the steps.

If the truth must be told, let it be recorded that Charlie's resistance was entirely out of proportion to his natural strength.

"Look here, May," he said weakly, when they had gained her distance, "I didn't intend to come over, or to bring my friend, either. I clean forgot you lived on this street when we happened to be walkin' down this way."

May paid little apparent attention to the explanation.

"I'm awfully glad you came by," she said, speaking directly to the stranger. "Won't you sit down a while? It's so perfectly beautiful."

She indicated the narrow little porch swing, where there was scarcely room for three to sit. Charlie, with a longing glance at his accustomed place, dropped into a

wicker chair, and the girl, with a quirk of her skirt, seated herself in the swing beside the middle-aged man. She gave him permission to light a cigar.

"I never smoke myself," Charlie said feebly, in a vain effort at conversation.

"I love the odor of a good cigar," May stated, as if confessing a weakness. "In fact, any kind of tobacco-smoke is pleasant to me. I think a man ought to smoke. I like to see it—they appear to enjoy it so."

Charlie, recalling the countless cigarettes he had foregone, grunted in surprise. Why, dog-gone it, she had pestered him into giving up smoking, and now— He sighed and admitted that woman is beyond the comprehension of man.

The middle-aged man understood the situation, and began talking easily and at random. Innocently enough he led the conversation from home life to houses, and from houses to bungalows. May, unsuspecting, joined in with such alluring sweetness and vivacity that Charlie felt thoroughly out of it.

"Now Charlie here was telling me about his patent on the portable bungalow for campers and summer resorts," the visitor remarked. "When he goes East, if he sees the right people, he ought to have no trouble in getting it put on the market. It's really a worthy idea."

"I've given that idea up," Charlie commented gloomily. "It's no good."

Despite herself, May turned to him sharply.

"Why isn't it?" she demanded.

"They were intended for families," he said tragically; "men and their wives and children. Nothin' to it in these days. Women ain't gettin' married any more. They like to gad around single too well."

The middle-aged man smiled.

"I wouldn't say that, Charlie."

"Well, it's true. It's this Bolshevik business that's turnin' the world upside down. Everything's upside down and wrong side out."

May sat in stony silence, and it fell upon the man sitting beside her to challenge Charlie's pessimism.

"But look at our great American home life," he protested. "Look at this nice little home right here—"

Charlie snorted.

"Home! You call this a home? If it don't collapse inside of two years I miss my guess!"

May flamed.

"Explain yourself, Mr. Gozie!" she demanded.

"Just what I said. It's a contract job. Right now your kitchen floor's saggin', and if you ever put in a piano it'll drop right through your parlor into the cellar."

He jammed his foot against the railing and pushed. There was a creak and a sway.

"Look at that! This house was just pitched together, like everything else these days. I'll bet four dollars your foundation is crackin'. They put sand instead of cement in that mortar. Another thing—there ain't a window in the house that don't stick in damp weather. You ain't got the right kind of mill-work."

May had not the expert knowledge of building to combat his statements, but she was not altogether without resentment.

"I don't think it quite gentlemanly of you to insult our house," she said.

"It ain't only your house, but it's all the houses along here," Charlie explained.

"What this town needs is an honest builder to put up homes fit to live in—homes what'll stand up a hundred years."

Charlie slumped further down in his chair in sullen disgust.

"Why don't you go into the building business here yourself, then?" the middle-aged man inquired cautiously.

"Because the people in this town don't care nothin' about homes!" Charlie flared. "The young people ain't interested. You take a town where there ain't scarcely any marriages—nobody wants homes. You got to have married people to make a town—to make anything. Marriage makes things hum. Look at our Presidents! We ain't never had a bachelor for a President, except once—Buchanan, I think it was. And look at your tramps and bums—all single men, every one of 'em!"

"Home life ought to be perfect contentment," May remarked with a trace of a sigh in her voice.

"That's right," the middle-aged man agreed. "It isn't the house so much; it's the happiness in it that counts. It's when two people live together in perfect harmony. Just a little roof over their two heads—"

Charlie sat upright suddenly.

"I'll tell you somethin' about roofs," he exclaimed. "This roof leaks. Why?" He gazed fiercely at May. "Because they

didn't dip them shingles in creosote. It wasn't nothin' but black paint. How you goin' to be happy in a home when the roof leaks? But these up-to-date people don't care. They can go out to the movies on rainy evenings and sit under a gravel roof. It's disgustin'!"

For a time the three sat silently. The middle-aged man was the first to speak.

"I had my

"Why—why did you let it slip away from you?" the girl asked tenderly.

"I've spent a good many years asking



"WE AIN'T NEVER
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FOR A PRESIDENT EXCEPT
ONCE—BUCHANAN, I THINK
IT WAS. AND LOOK AT YOUR
TRAMPS AND BUMS—ALL SINGLE
MEN, EVERY ONE OF 'EM!"

chance for a home and happiness years ago," he said softly; "but I was young and headstrong, and I thought I knew everything there was to know. It was on a night something like this—that it ended."

The moon had risen higher in the sky and was flooding everything with silver.

myself that question," the middle-aged man replied. "It was because I was too young, I guess, to know how much it really meant. I looked at things through my own eyes. I never saw as she did; never tried to. I didn't realize that a woman's mind is pitched in a different key from a man's. I never quite caught the gentle strain in her nature, and I stormed away like a young fool."

Charlie coughed apologetically.

"The darn roof *does* leak," he said. "Even the picket fence wabbles. I ain't blamin' May for the house. Everything is naturally goin' to the dogs these days. Why don't the young people take hold and start things right? Why don't girls realize that opportunity—"

May was not without views herself.

"Yes, and why don't the men—" she began, almost in anger.

Charlie raised a hand.

"No hard feelings, May," he said. "We won't argue." He glanced at his watch. "It's after eleven o'clock. We'd better be goin'."

He got up, and the middle-aged man regretfully joined him.

The farewells were politely and coldly formal. The two men strolled out into a night that was radiant with beauty. The sheen of the moon splashed Collinsville with its fairy magic.

At the far corner the middle-aged man stopped.

"You're surely going away, Charlie?" he asked.

"Yes." It was a dogged reply.

"Then you ought to go back and tell her good-by in proper form. You only said good night. It's not quite fair to her to leave so coldly. Even if it is good-by, it ought to be said. You ought to leave her a last memory of you—"

Charlie's feelings tied his tongue for a moment.

"I guess you judged somethin' by the conversation?" he asked awkwardly.

The middle-aged man nodded.

"Go back and tell her," he repeated.

"I'll sit here and wait on the curb. And don't talk about shingles—"

He sat down with his back resting against a tree, while Charlie, in that rare torture that only love-stricken and heart-sick youth may feel, slowly walked back to the little house.

The floor of the porch creaked beneath his step, and he could not help making a mental note of it. Poor material and bad workmanship!

And then he caught sight of a frail, crushed little thing cuddled away in the darkest corner of the porch, her pretty organdy dress a dim splotch of color. That was all.

Charlie paused.

"May—" he began.

She did not answer.

"May, I just come back to tell you that I ain't sore or mad about anything in the world. I'm leavin' because you want me to, but I do it 'with malice toward none,' as Lincoln said, and 'charity toward all.' I'm sayin' nothing about my work and my prospects now. I'm just wantin' to tell you that it ain't any other girl, and that there won't be any other girl. I guess I'm hasty and brash, sometimes, but—well, I suppose it's good-by forever!"

There was a faint yet poignant sound—the involuntary soul-cry that springs to a woman's lips, a mingling of a sob and moan.

V

THE middle-aged man looked at his watch. It was half past eleven. The last lights were winking out of the bungalow windows. A sweet, calm stillness settled over the town. He was drowsy. The soft light of the moon was soothing.

It was a quarter to twelve when he looked again. Next it was twelve o'clock. Reluctantly he rose and stretched himself. There was no use in waiting.

He had just raised his window, and was ready to turn into the sheets, when he heard a merry whistling down the street. It was Charlie Gozie swinging homeward. The down-stairs door banged shut; a youthful, buoyant footfall ascended the stairs.

The middle-aged man listened. Presently strange sounds issued from the adjoining room, as if a trunk were being unpacked and the contents restored to closet and dresser drawers.

Came silence, and then one heavy, discarded shoe thumped on the floor, quickly followed by the second. There was a creaking of bed-springs, and a few minutes later a low, rhythmic sound was faintly audible. Charlie Gozie was snoring. The potential young builder was sunk in the deep sleep of perfect peace.

In a little bedroom of a cheap bungalow, not many blocks away, in the moonlight that streamed in at the window, lay a slender young girl with a gentle smile of happiness on her face. The handkerchief she held in her hand was wet with tears—tears of joy.

Having nothing better to do, the middle-aged man shifted the pillow under his head and gave way to slumber. There was gentle repose in his soul.

The Sea Bride*

THE ROMANCE OF AN EVENTFUL WHALING-CRUISE

By Ben Ames Williams

Author of "The Murder Ship," "Swords of Wax," "Three in a Thousand," etc.

XXVII

A CURIOUS lull settled down upon the Sally Sims during the days after Noll's open accusation of Faith and his collapse before her steady courage. Apathy was in the air. They saw few whales, lowered for them without zeal, and missed more than one that should have been killed. There was a silence upon the ship, like the hush of listening men who wait to hear an expected call. This paralysis gripped every soul aboard—save Noll Wing alone.

Noll, in those last days, stalked his deck like a parody of the man he once had been. Faith had put within him a fictitious courage; he thought himself once more the master, as in the past. His heels pounded the planks; his head was high; his voice roared. But there was a tremor in his stride; there was a trembling about the poise of him; there was a quaver in his voice. He was like a child who plays at being a man.

They humored him; the men and the mates seemed to enter into a conspiracy to befool him. They leaped to his bidding; they shrank from his curses as if desperate with fear; and Noll was so delighted with all this that he was perpetually good-natured and jovial.

He was, of course, drinking heavily and steadily; but the drink seemed to hearten him and give him strength. Certainly it made him lenient; for on three occasions when the men found a bottle forward, and befuddled themselves with it, Noll only laughed, as if at a capital jest.

Faith wondered and was distressed, and watched to see how the liquor was being stolen. She was disturbed and alarmed; but Noll jested at her fears.

"A little of it never hurt a man," he told her boastfully. "Look at me, to see that! Let be, Faith. Let be."

When she protested, he overrode her; and to show his own certainty of himself, he did a thing that Noll, sober, would never have done. He had the rum drawn from the barrel in his storeroom, and served out to the men a ration daily. It amused him to see them half-fuddled with it. He forced it on them; and once, while Faith watched hopelessly, he commanded a hulking Cape Verder—the biggest man in the fo'c's'le—to drink a bout with him. They took glass for glass, till the other was helpless as a log; and Noll vaunted his own prowess in the matter.

Dan'l Tobey contented himself with watching the progress of the tragedy. He no longer stuck a finger in the pie. The captain was going—that was plain to any seeing eye.

Faith could do nothing; Brander could do nothing. Between these two no further word had passed; but there was no need. Coming face to face on deck, the day after Noll surprised them, their eyes met in a long and steady glance. Their eyes met and spoke; and after that there was no need of words between them. There was a pledging of vows in that glance; there was also a renunciation. Both saw, both understood. Faith thought she knew Brander to the depths.

Neither, in that moment, knew that Dan'l Tobey was at hand; but the mate had seen, and he had comprehended. He slipped away, held his peace, considered.

Brander was fighting for Roy, to fulfil his pledge to Faith. He had set himself to win the boy's confidence and esteem; he applied himself to this with all the strength

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there was in him. Yet he was careful; he did not force the issue; he did not harass Roy with his attentions. He held off, let Roy see for himself, let him think. There were days when he thought he made some progress; there were days when he thought the effort was a hopeless one. Nevertheless, he persisted.

Noll Wing's good-will in those days extended even to Brander. He offered Brander a drink one day. Brander refused and Noll insisted—and was still refused.

"Come, Brander!" Noll said hotly, querulously. "Don't be stiff, man. It will warm you, do you good. You're needing warming. You're over cold and calm."

Brander shook his head, smiling.

"Thanks, no, sir."

"Damn it, man," Noll complained, "are you too proud to drink with the skipper?"

Brander refused again; and Noll's brows gathered suspiciously.

"Why not?"

"My wish, sir."

"Ye've a grudge against me. I remember. You stick with Mauger!"

"No, sir."

Noll flung out his hand.

"Be off. Your sour face is too ugly for me to look at. Mauger's none so particular. He'll drink with me."

It was true; Mauger had more than once accepted drink from the captain. Noll, at these times, watched the one-eyed man furtively, almost appealingly. It was as if he sought to placate him and make a friend of him.

Mauger had a weak head; he was not one to stand much liquor. It dizzied him; and this amused Noll. That day, after Brander had refused him, Noll sent for Mauger, made the one-eyed man tipsy, and laughed at the jest of it.

Then, one day, this state of affairs came abruptly to an end. Noll went down into the storeroom to fill his bottle; and the spigot on the whisky-barrel gasped and failed. The whisky was gone.

Now Noll had given of the rum to the crew; he had exhausted that; but the whisky he kept jealously. He knew there should be more—much more—gallons, at the least. He turned the handle of the spigot again, tipped the barrel, unable to understand. His bottle was half full, but no more came.

He frowned, puzzled his heavy head, tried to understand. He came stumbling

up out of the storeroom at last, with the half-filled bottle in his hand; and the man's face was white. He sought Faith, held the bottle out to her.

"I say—" he stammered. "It's gone—gone!"

"What is it, Noll?" Faith asked sharply.

"The whisky's gone."

"Thank God!" Faith cried.

He stared at her thickly.

"Eh? You had a hand in it? You've stole it away?"

"No."

He looked at her and knew she spoke the truth. He shook his head.

"Some bound—" he whispered.

"They've stole it!"

She questioned him; he had the shrewdness which occasionally characterizes the alcoholic. He had kept some count of the whisky used during the cruise; he had himself tilted the barrel two weeks before. It was then a quarter full. The thefts that had appeared in the fo'c's'le could not account for the rest. There was still a considerable amount that must have been stolen, and that had not yet appeared.

"It's aboard here, by God!" he swore at last. "They've got it hid away. You, Faith—"

She shook her head.

"No," he said placatingly. "You'd not do that trick—not rob an old man. I've got to have it, Faith!" His eyes suddenly flickered with panic. "It's life, Faith, life! I've got to have it, I say."

He was right, she knew. There must still be a hidden store of the liquor aboard the Sally, to be doled out to the men by the thief in his own good time. And Faith knew enough of such matters to understand that Noll, without the ration of alcohol to which he was accustomed, would suffer torment, would be like a madman. The stuff must be found.

Noll was already trembling at the prospect of deprivation; he hugged to his breast the scant store that remained to him. Of a sudden, as if afraid that even this would be stolen, he tipped the bottle to his lips. He gulped greedily. Before Faith could interfere, the last of it was gone.

That fierce draft put some strength and courage back into him.

"I'll make them give it up, by God!" he swore. "Watch!"

He started for the deck; and Faith, afraid for him, followed quietly behind.

Passing through the main cabin, he roared to the officers who were asleep in their bunks:

"On deck, all hands! On deck, all hands!"

They leaped out to obey him, not knowing what to expect. He reached the deck, still bellowing:

"On deck, all! On deck, every man of you!" Brander was amidships. "Rout out the dogs, Mr. Brander," he added. "Fetch them aft!"

The men came; they tumbled up from the fo'c's'le; they slid down from the mast-heads. Harpooners, mates, under officers grouped themselves by the captain; the crew faced him in a huddled group. He cursed them, man by man, for thieving dogs.

"Now," he said at last. "Now some one o' you has got the stuff hid away. Out with it; or I'll cut the heart out of you!"

He paused, looking about him with flickering, reddened eyes. No man stirred, but Dan'l Tobey asked:

"What's wrong, Cap'n Wing?"

Noll told him, told them all, profanely. Somewhere there was hidden a store of whisky; he meant to have it. If the thief gave it up, so much the better. He would get off with a rope's-ending. If he persisted in silence, he would die. Noll vowed that, by all the oaths he knew.

The men stirred; they looked at their neighbors; and then their eyes fastened on the captain with a curious intentness. They licked their lips; and Faith thought they were enjoying the spectacle of Noll's weak rage. She thought they were like dogs of a pack, with hungry eyes, watching the futile anger of a dying man. She was afraid of them for an instant; then she was afraid of no man in the world. She stood by Noll Wing's side, proud and level-eyed.

When Noll got no answer, his cackling fury waxed. He swore every man of them should be tied up and flogged unless the guilty spoke. They scowled at that; and one of them said sullenly:

"It's no man forrard a doing this, sir. Look aft, sir—look at them that had the chance."

The words seemed to focus the sullen hate among the men; they growled like beasts and surged a step toward the captain. Brander, from the captain's side, moved toward them, and lashed at him who had spoken with a swift fist, so that the man

fell and lay still as a log. Brander looked down at the still man, faced the others.

"Be silent," he said quietly, "unless you've a word to say to the captain about what he wants. And get back—back into the waist; and stay there!"

They gave back before him.

"They mind you well, Mr. Brander," Dan'l Tobey said softly from behind Brander's back. "You've a rare control of them."

The words were innocent enough, but the tone was accusation. Brander faced the mate, and Dan'l grinned malignantly.

Noll passed abruptly from threats to pleadings; he tried to cloak his pleading under a mask of fellowship; he spoke to the men as to friends, beseeching them to yield what he wanted. They remained silent; and his mask fell off, and he abased himself before them with his words, so that old Tichel and Willis Cox were sickened, and Dan'l was pleased. Brander made no sign; he stood loyally at the captain's side; and Faith was on Noll's other hand.

She was studying the faces of the men and of the officers, seeking for a shadow of guilt. The men were sullen, but there was no shame in their eyes. There was nothing furtive—save in the countenance of Mauger. The one-eyed man had ever a furtive look; the twitching of his closed eye irresistibly suggested a malignant wink. Faith watched him; she saw his eyes were fixed on Brander. In spite of herself, a cold pang of doubt touched her. Mauger had reason to hate Noll Wing. Had he—

She put the thought away, to study Dan'l Tobey. But Dan'l, though he was obviously content with matters, had no trace of guilt or fear in his demeanor. He was perfectly assured, almost triumphant. Faith thought he could not appear so if he were the thief. Not Dan'l; not Willis Cox, nor Tichel. Not Brander; she would not have it so!

Yet she could not keep her eyes away from Mauger's leering, chuckling, furtive countenance.

Abruptly she touched Noll's arm. The captain was near a collapse. He was pleading helplessly, so that some of the men were beginning to grin.

"Noll, do not beg," she said quietly. "You are master here."

He caught himself together with a terrific effort. He turned and stumbled away,

down into the cabin. Faith went after him. Dan'l came down a little later.

"Why not put into port somewhere, sir?" he suggested. "Get what you want—"

Noll clutched at that desperately.

"Aye, Mr. Tobey. What's nearest?"

Dan'l named the nearest island where they were likely to find a trading-post. Noll nodded.

"Put for it, Dan'l. All sail on. For God's sake, quickly, man!"

Ten minutes later the Sally heeled to a new tack. Noll, with Faith, below in the cabin, bit at his nails, and tried to hold himself and stifle the appetite that was tearing him. His passion and pleading had burned out the effects of the drink he had taken; his body agonized for more.

By nightfall Noll was shaking with an ague. He could not sleep that night. And toward dawn a brewing gale caught the Sally.

She fought that storm till noon, giving way before it; and in the cabin Noll passed from tremors to paroxysms of fright. He gnawed at his own flesh, and hallucinations began to prey upon him. Faith bade him lie down, tried to soothe him. She knew the danger of his enforced abstinence, she gave him a draft that should have compelled sleep; but after an hour he woke with a scream, clutched at her shoulders with fingers that bit the flesh, flung her away from him, and cowered in the most distant corner, his hands before him, shrieking:

"Back, Mauger! Get away. You devil! Mauger, get back. Eh, man, get away. By God! I'll—I never meant the kick, man. Let be! My God, let be!"

"It's Faith, Noll," she called softly. "It's Faith, Faith—not Mauger."

He recognized her. He ran and caught her, swung her around before him as a shield, and besought her to keep Mauger and his knife away.

"He's not here, Noll," she told him over and over. "He's not here. It's Faith!"

"Look at his knife!" he cried, and he pointed horribly. "His knife—it's red now. Look at the knife! Kill him, Faith! Drive him away!"

She held him against her breast as she would have held a child. Brander came to the door with Willis Cox. She called to them:

"Stay away! He's mine. I'll tend him."

Noll saw them, and screamed at Brander in a panic:

"There! Him! There's a knife in his sleeve!"

Brander slipped out of sight. She managed to quiet Noll for a space; but he broke out again.

"Mauger! He's coming, Faith. There!"

And then, to the man he thought he saw:

"Mauger! Get back, man—get back! God's sake—"

Then he wept whisperingly to Faith:

"See his eye! Make him put it back—where it belongs. Mauger, man—"

Bit by bit she wooed him back to sanity, or the semblance of it. He was quiet when Dan'l Tobey came down.

"Are we making it, Dan'l?" Noll demanded when he saw the mate. "Are we near there?"

Dan'l shook his head.

"Not with this gale, sir. We're hove to—drifting away—"

Noll came to his feet, catlike.

"By God, you're all cowards! I'll bring her in. I'll bring her in, I say!"

He shook Faith away and went up to the deck with Dan'l at his heels. The Sally, riding high, as whalers do, was reasonably dry; but she was fighting desperately in the gale, racking her rigging. The wind seemed to clear Noll's head. He looked about, aloft; bellowed an order to get sail on her.

Faith protested.

"Noll; she'll never stand—"

He brushed her away with clenched fist. She took shelter in a corner by the deck-house, ten feet from him. Noll Wing took the ship, and under his hand the Sally did miracles.

That fight with the storm was a deed men still talk about; they say it was an inhuman and a marvelous thing. Noll stood aft, legs braced, scorning a handhold. His voice rang through the singing wind to the remotest corner of the Sally and the highest spar. Regardless of wind and sea, he crowded on sail, brought her around to the course he wished to take, and drove her into it.

Time and time again, during that afternoon and that long night, every sane man aboard thought her very masts must be torn out of her. Three times sails did go; but Noll would never slacken. On the after deck, he raved like a madman, but his commands were seamanly. A miracle of seamanship and stark madness, but madness that succeeded. The Sally drove into the gale, she fought as madly as Noll him-

self was fighting; and Noll, aft, screamed through the night and drove them on.

Faith never left her post, so near him. No man aboard had sleep that night. No man dared sleep, lest death find him in his dreams. Willis Cox and Tichel came to Noll more than once, beseeching; but he drove them away. Dan'l never interfered with the captain; it seemed there was a madness on him, too. And Brander and Dan'l Tobey between them were Noll's right hand and his left, driving the men to the tasks Noll set them, holding them sternly in hand.

They could only guess how far they had come through the darkness and the storm. An hour before daylight Dan'l stopped to gasp to Faith:

"We're near there, I'm thinking—if we're not nearer the bottom!"

Brander took more practical steps. He found Mauger, set the one-eyed man well forward, and bade him watch and listen for the first sign of land. Mauger nodded chucklingly; he gripped a hold on the taut lines, set his one eye into the darkness, and tuned his ear to the storm.

The wind by this time was moderating; even Faith could feel a slackening of the pressure of it that had torn at her garments the night through. She was weak with fighting it; nevertheless, she held her post. And the steady thrust of the gale slowly modified and gave way. The first hints of light showed in the skies. They caught glimpses of scudding clouds low overhead, but the worst was past, and every man knew it.

Noll, still standing like a colossus at his post, knew it; he shook his fist at the skies and the sea, and he cursed the wind and dared it. Faith could see him dimly in the growing light—his head bare, his eyes frantic, his cheeks sunken; an enormous but wasted figure of a man.

The very waters about them were quieting somewhat. Their nerves and their muscles relaxed; they were straining their eyes to see into the dimness of the coming day.

It was Mauger, in the bows, who caught the first hint of danger. He saw that they drove abruptly from long-rolling swells into quieter waters. He stared off to windward, looking to see what had broken the force of the seas. He saw nothing; but thought he heard a rumbling roar there. Then he looked forward, where the less turbulent waters were piling ahead of them.

He looked forward, and glimpsed a line of white that lived and never died; and he turned and screamed a warning aft—ran, to carry the word, screaming as he ran.

Brander, amidships, heard him and shouted to Noll Wing; but Noll did not hear. The captain was intoxicated with the long battle; he was delirious with the cry of tortured nerves and starved body. He did not hear.

Mauger flashed past Brander as he ran. The one-eyed man's screams were inarticulate now. It was too late to swing the ship clear, in any case.

Noll saw Mauger coming. He put up his hands and his eyes glared. He shrieked with overwhelming terror. Mauger flung on. Then the Sally's bows drove on the solid sand; Mauger sprawled; men everywhere fell headlong. Noll was thrown back against the after rail.

Mauger rolled over and over where he fell; and it chanced that his sheath-knife dropped out in the fall and touched his hand. He had it in his fingers when he scrambled to his feet, still intent on bearing his warning. He had the knife in his hand as he leaped toward the wheel. He did not yet realize that it was too late to swerve the Sally. Toward the wheel he ran, knife in hand, forgetting knife and Noll Wing.

To Noll's eyes, where he stood behind the wheel, Mauger must have looked like a charging fiend. He saw the knife. He screamed again, and turned and flung himself out over the after rail.

He was instantly gone. Perhaps the undertow, perhaps some creature of the sea, perhaps the fates that had hung over him struck then; but those aboard the Sally Sims were never to see Noll Wing again, nor Noll's dead body.

XXVIII

DAWN came abruptly; a lowering dawn, with gray and greasy clouds racing past so low that they seemed to scrape and tear themselves upon the tips of the masts. No sun showed; there was no light in the sky. The dawn was evidenced only by a lessening of the blackness of the night. They could see, that was all. There was no fog, but a steady rain sprang up and clouded objects at a little distance.

This rain had one good effect—it beat down the turbulence of the waves. Faith, from the bow, could see that they had

grounded upon a sandy beach which spread like a crescent to right and left. The tips of the crescent were rocky points which sheltered the Sally from the full force of the seas. She was not pounding upon the sand; she lay where she had struck, heeled a little to one side. There were breakers about her and ahead of her upon the sand; but these were not dangerous. They were caused by the reflex tumult of the waters, stirred up in this sheltered bay in sympathy with the storm outside.

The gale was dying now. Above them the wind still raced and played with the flying clouds; but there was no pressure of it upon what little canvas the Sally still flew. They were at peace.

At peace! Faith, studying the position of the Sally, was herself at peace. This was her first reaction to her husband's death; she was at peace.

Noll was gone, Noll Wing whom she had loved and married. Poor Noll! She pitied him; she was conscious of a still-living affection for him. There was no hate in her; there was little sorrow. He was gone; but life had burdened him too long. He was well rid of it, she thought; well rid of his tormented flesh; well rid of the terror which had pursued him.

When Noll went over the stern, Dan'l Tobey appeared from nowhere, and saw Mauger with the knife in his hand, standing paralyzed with horror. Dan'l fell upon Mauger, fists flying. He downed the little man, dropped on him with both knees, gripped for his throat.

Then Brander, coming from the waist of the ship on Mauger's heels, caught Dan'l by the collar and jerked him to his feet. Dan'l's hands, clenched on Mauger's throat, lifted the little man a foot from the deck before they let go to grip for Brander. The men clustered aft; old Tichel's teeth bared. In another moment, there would have been a death-battle upon the littered decks.

But Faith cried through the gloom:

"Dan'l! Mr. Brander! Drop it! Stand away!"

There was a command in her clear tones which Dan'l must have obeyed; and Brander did as she bade instinctively. The two still faced each other, heads forward, shoulders lowered. Behind Brander, Mauger crawled to his feet, choking and fumbling at his throat. Faith said to Dan'l:

"I saw what happened, Dan'l. It was not the fault of Mauger."

"He had a knife—"

"He fell," she said. "I saw. He fell when the Sally struck; his knife dropped from its sheath. He picked it up. That was all."

"All?" Dan'l protested. "He drove Noll Wing to death!"

She shook her head.

"No. It was Noll's own terrors. Noll was mad."

"What was Mauger doing aft, then? He'd no place here."

"I had him forward, watching for breakers," Brander explained. "He saw them and yelled, and when no one heard, he raced to give the word."

Faith nodded.

"Yes; he was gripping for the wheel to swing it down, even when Noll—"

Dan'l swung to Brander.

"You're overquick to come between me and the men, Mr. Brander," he said harshly. "Best mend that."

"I'll not see Mauger smashed for no fault," Brander told him steadily.

Dan'l took a step nearer the other.

"You'll understand I'm master here, now!"

There was battle in Brander's eyes. Men's blood was hot that morning. But Faith stepped between.

"Dan'l, Noll's gone. First thing is to get the Sally free."

Dan'l still eyed Brander for a moment; then he drew back, swung away, looked around. The island they had struck was barely visible through the drifting rain.

"This is not where we headed," he said.

"You know this place?"

"No."

"Then we'll get the ship clear as quick as may be."

He smiled sneeringly.

"I'm thinking we're here to stay, Faith. Leastwise, the Sally is!"

"The Sally does not stay here," Faith told him sternly. "She floats; she fills her casks; she goes safely home to Jonathan Felt. Mark that, Dan'l."

"You're not overconcerned for Noll's going," Dan'l said sullenly.

"He's gone," said Faith. "An end to that. But the Sally was his charge; she's my charge now. I mean to see her safe home."

"Your charge?" Dan'l echoed. "It's in my mind that when the captain dies, the mate succeeds."

"You take his place if I choose," Faith told him.

He met her eyes and tried to look her down. Mauger had slipped away; old Tichel and Willis Cox and Brander were standing by.

"You take his place if I choose," Faith repeated.

Dan'l looked from her to the officers.

There was a weakness in Dan'l's villainy. He could destroy, he could undermine trust, seduce a boy, kill honor; but he lacked constructive ability. He had known for months that this moment must come—this moment when Noll should be gone, and the ship and all the treasures aboard her should lie ready to his hand. Yet he had made no plan for this crisis; he did not know what he meant to do.

Even now he might have won by open battle. Old Tichel was certainly with him; perhaps Willis, too; and Roy, and many of the men. A blow, a fight, and the day might have been his.

But Dan'l was never a hand for strife where guile might do as well; he was not by nature a man of battle. Also, Faith was within his reach now. Noll was gone; there was no barrier between them; he need not anger her, so long as there was a chance to win by gentler ways. He nodded in abrupt assent.

"All right," he said. "You were Noll's wife; your interest is a fair one. I'll work with you, Faith."

Faith was content with that.

"We'll get the Sally away," she said.

Dan'l smiled.

"How?"

"Get out a kedge; we'll try to warp her off when the tide comes in."

He chuckled.

"Oh, aye! We'll try."

"Do," said Faith; and she turned and went below.

She went below, wept a little for pity of old Noll, and then dried her eyes and strengthened her heart for the task before her—to bring Noll's ship safely home.

XXIX

It was mid-tide when the Sally struck; and this was fortunate in some measure, because the ebbing waters left her free of the rollers that might have driven her hard and fast upon the sand. They broke against her stern, but with no great force behind them. At the slack of the ebb the

men could wade about her bows to their waists in the water. They got the kedge out astern and carried a whale-line about the capstan; and when the tide came quietly in again, they waited for the flood, then strove at the bars to warp her free.

When she did not stir, though the men toiled till their veins were like to burst, some cursed despairingly; but Faith did not despair, nor Dan'l. Dan'l was quiet, watching, smiling at his thoughts. He let Faith have her way.

Before the next tide, they had rigged the cutting-in tackle to give a stouter pull at the kedge; but this time the whale-line parted and lashed along the decks, and more than one man was struck and bruised.

"You see, we're here to stay," Dan'l said. "Best thing is to lower and make for the nearest port."

"Leave the ship?" Faith asked.

"Yes. What else?"

"No. We'll not leave her."

He smiled.

"What then?"

"It's a week past full moon," she said. "There'll be higher tides on the new moon, and still higher on the next full. We'll float her, one time or another."

Dan'l chuckled.

"An easterly wind will drive her high and dry, 'fore then."

Faith's eyes blazed.

"I tell you, Dan'l, we stick with the Sally; and we get her safe away. Are you afraid to stick?"

He laughed outright, pleasantly.

"Pshaw, Faith, you know I'm not afraid."

He could be likable when he tried; she liked him, faintly, in that moment. She gripped his hand.

"Good, Dan'l! We'll manage it, in the end."

So they settled for the waiting; and Dan'l put the men to work repairing the harm the storm had done the Sally. Her rigging was strained; it had parted here and there. She had lost some canvas. Willis Cox's boat had been carried away. They rove new rigging, spread new sails, replaced Willis's boat with one of the spares. There was work for all hands for a month to put the vessel in shape again.

One thing favored them. The Sally, for all her clumsy lines, was stanch; and the shock when she drove her bow upon the sand had opened never a seam. She was

leaking no more than a sweet ship will. They found a cask or two of oil that had burst in the hold, and there was some confusion among the stores; but these were small matters, easily set right.

The new moon was due on the fifth day after they struck. On the fourth, another bottle of whisky appeared in the fo'c's'le, and two men were drunk. Dan'l had the men whipped. Faith made no objection to this; but she watched the faces of the others. She watched the officers, and Brander in particular, and Mauger.

Brander, since the morning of Noll's death, had avoided her more strictly. He and Dan'l did not speak, save when they must. She saw the man was keeping a guard upon himself; and she puzzled over this. She could not know that Brander was afire with joy at the new hope that was awakening in him—afire with a vision of her. He fought against this, held himself in check; and she saw only that he was morose and still, and avoided her eye.

The high tides of the new moon failed to float them; and there was growling forward. Dan'l said openly that he believed they would never go free. The men heard; and the superstitions of the sea began to play about the fo'c's'le.

There was unrest; the men felt approaching the possible liberation from ship's discipline when they should abandon the Sally. They remembered the ambergris beneath the cabin. There was a fortune there. They could take no oil with them; but they could take that, when the time should come to leave the ship. There was plenty of room in one boat for it and for half a dozen men besides.

They fretted at the waiting, called it hopeless, as Dan'l did. The barrier between officers and men was lowered; more than one of the men spoke to Brander of the ambergris. Did he claim it for his own?

Faith one day heard a man talking to Brander amidships. She caught only a word or two, but one of these words was "gris." She saw that the man was asking Brander a question; she saw that on Brander's answer the man grinned with greed in his eyes, and turned away to whisper to two of his fellows.

She wondered what Brander had said to him, why Brander had not silenced the man. And she watched Brander the closer, her heart sickening with a fear she would not name.

They had landed before this and explored their island. Low and flat and no more than a mile or two in extent, it had fruit a plenty, and a spring of good water; but none dwelt anywhere upon it. It soon palled upon them; they stuck by the ship.

The days held clear and fine, the nights were warm, and the crescent moon above them fattened, night by night, till it was no longer a crescent but half a circle of silver radiance that touched the beach and the trees and the sea with magic fingers.

That night, with the full tides still a week away, Roy Kilcup came from the fo'c's'le into the waist and look aft. There was no officer in sight at the moment save old Tichel, and Roy hailed him softly. Tichel went forward to where the boy stood; they whispered together. Then Tichel went with Roy toward the fo'c's'le.

Faith was in her cabin; Dan'l was in the main cabin; and Willis and Brander were playing cribbage near him when the outcry forward roused them. A man yelled. They were on deck in tumbling haste; and Faith was at their heels.

Came Tichel, dragging Mauger by the collar. His right hand gripped Mauger; his left held a bottle. He shook the one-eyed man till Mauger's teeth rattled, and he brandished the bottle.

"Caught the pig!" he cried furiously. "Here he is! With this hid under his blanket!"

"I never put it there," Mauger protested.

Tichel cuffed him into silence.

"What's that, Mr. Tichel?" Dan'l asked sharply.

"Whisky, Mr. Tobey. He took it forward and hid it in his bunk."

"Tell the whole of it, Mr. Tichel," Faith said. "What happened?"

She looked from Tichel to Brander. Brander was standing stiffly; she thought his face was white. Mauger hung in Tichel's grip.

Old Tichel had given a promise to Roy; Roy had begged him not to tell that the boy had spied.

"I saw him go forward with something under his coat," Tichel said. "Never thought for a minute; then it come to me what it might be. I took after him. Rest of the men were on deck, sleeping. It's hot below, you'll mind. I dropped down quietly. Mauger, here, was in his bunk. I routed him out, and rummaged, and there you are, ma'am."

He shook the bottle triumphantly.

"Where did you get it, Mauger?" Faith asked the one-eyed man.

"Never knowed it was there," Mauger swore. "Honest t' the Lord, ma'am!"

Tichel slapped his face stunningly.

"No more of that, Mr. Tichel!" Faith said. "Dan'l, what do you think?"

Dan'l lifted his hand, with a glance at Brander.

"Why—nothing! Somebody's been doing it; him as well as another."

"Willis," Faith asked, "what's your notion?"

"I guess Mauger done it."

"Brander?"

Brander lifted his head and met her eyes.

"Other men have found whisky in their bunks without knowing how it got there," he said. "I believe Mauger."

"I'm saying I saw him take it aft," old Tichel snarled. He dropped Mauger and took a fierce step toward Brander. "Ye think I'd lie?"

"I think you're mistaken," Brander said evenly.

Tichel leaped at him; Brander gripped the other's arms at the elbows and held him.

"Enough of that!" Faith said sharply. "We'll end this thing to-night. Mr. Tobey, get lanterns and search the ship till you find the rest of this stuff." She took the whisky-bottle, opened it, and poured its contents over the rail. "Search it out," she said. "Be about it!"

Save Dan'l Tobey, the officers stood stock-still, as if not understanding. Dan'l acted as quickly as if he had expected the order. He sent Silva, the harpooner, to get the foremast hands together forward and keep them there under his eye. He sent Tichel and Yella Boy into the main hold, Willis and Long Jim into the after 'tween-decks. Brander and Eph Hitch were to search the cabin and the captain's storeroom; and Faith went down with them to give them the keys. Loum, Kellick, and Tinch, the cook, were put to rummaging about the after deck and amidships.

There was no need of lights upon the deck itself; the moon bathed the Sally in its rays, and one might have read by them without undue effort. Below, the whale-oil lanterns went to and fro.

Brander and Hitch made short work of their task; and they came on deck with Faith. Dan'l sent Brander to rummage through the steerage, where the harpooners

slept; and at Faith's suggestion, Hitch and Loum went aloft to the mastheads to make sure there was no secret cache there.

They were an hour or more at their search of the Sally; and at the end of that time they were no wiser than they were before. Faith had gone below before the end; she came on deck as Tichel and Yella Boy reported nothing found below.

"Have you found anything?" she asked Dan'l.

"No."

"Where have you looked?"

"Everywhere aboard here, Faith. The stuff's well hidden, sure!"

"If it's not on the Sally, it's near her," Faith said quietly. "Search the boats, Mr. Tobey."

Dan'l nodded.

"But it 'd not be in them," he said.

"That's sure enough."

"It's nowhere else, you say. Try."

Willis Cox and Brander turned toward where their boats hung by the rail.

"Willis—Mr. Brander," Faith said quietly, "let Mr. Tobey do the searching."

Willis stopped readily enough; Brander—forewarned, perhaps, by some instinctive fear—hesitated.

"Mr. Brander," Faith said again.

He stood still where he was. Dan'l was looking through his own boat at the moment. He passed to old Tichel's; to that of Willis Cox. Brander's boat came last. Dan'l Tobey flashed his lantern in it as he had in the others, studied it from bow to stern, opened the stern locker beneath the cuddy boards.

There was a jug there—a jug that in the other boats had contained water. He pulled the stopper and smelled.

"By God, Faith, it's here!" he cried.

XXX

THE closer the bond between man and man, or between man and woman, the easier it is to embroil them, one with the other. It is hard for an outsider to provoke a quarrel between strangers, or between casual acquaintances; but it is not hard for a crafty man to make dissension between friends; and almost any one may, if he chooses, bring about discord between lovers. This is a strange and contradictory thing.

When Dan'l found the whisky in Brander's boat and came toward Faith with the open jug in his hands, Faith stood with a white face, looking steadily at Brander, and

not at Dan'l at all. Brander had made one move when Dan'l lifted the jug; he had stepped quickly toward the boat, but Faith spoke quietly to him. He stopped and looked at her.

Dan'l was watching the two of them. Mauger saw a chance, and as the mate passed where the one-eyed man crouched, Mauger leaped at him to snatch the whisky away. Tichel caught Mauger from behind, and held him.

The little man had had the best intentions in the world; but this movement on his part completed the evidence of Brander's guilt; for Mauger was Brander's man, loyal as a dog, and Faith knew it. She thought quickly, remembering the past days, remembering Mauger's furtive air and Brander's aloofness, and his support of Mauger against Tichel. She was sure, before Dan'l reached her with the jug, that Mauger and Brander were guilty as Judas—Brander especially. She scarce considered Mauger at all.

Dan'l handed her the jug, and she smelled at it. Whisky, beyond a doubt. She took it to the rail and poured it over-side as she had poured the contents of the bottle; then came slowly back and handed the empty jug to Brander.

"This is yours," she said. "You had best rinse it and fill it with water and put it in your boat again."

The moon was bright upon them as they stood on the deck. He could see her face, he could see her eyes; and he saw that she thought him guilty. His soul sickened with the bitterness of it; and his lips twisted in a smile.

"Very well," he said.

She looked at him a little wistfully.

"You're not denying it's yours?"

He shook his head.

"No."

If she believed, let her believe. He was furious with her.

"Why did you do it?" she asked.

He said nothing; and she looked up at him a moment more, and then turned to Mauger.

"Why did you do it?" she asked the little man.

Mauger squinted sidewise at Brander. Mauger was Brander's man; and all his loyalty was to Brander. Brander chose not to speak, not to deny the charge she laid against them. All right; if Brander could keep silent, so could he. If Brander would not deny, neither would he. He

grinned at Faith, and the closed lids that covered his empty eye-socket seemed to wink; but he said nothing at all.

Dan'l Tobey chuckled at Brander.

"Eh, Brander, I'm ashamed for ye," he said. "Such an example to the crew!"

Brander held silent. He was waiting for Faith to speak.

When neither Brander nor Mauger would answer her, Faith turned her back on them all, went to the after rail, and stood there alone, thinking. She knew Dan'l would wait on her word. What was she to do? She needed Brander; she would need him more and more. Dan'l was never to be trusted; she must have a man at her back. In spite of her belief that he had done this thieving, she trusted Brander. And she loved him—loved him so that as she stood there, with her back to them all, the tears rolled down her cheeks, and her nails dug at her palms.

Why had he done this? Why did he not deny—protest—defend himself? She loved him so much that she hated him. If he had offended against herself alone, she might have forgiven; but by stealing whisky and giving it to the crew he was striking at the welfare of the Sally Sims, and the Sally was dearer to Faith just now than herself.

She set her lips, brushed the tears from her cheeks, and turned back to them.

"Mr. Tobey," she said, "put Mr. Brander in irons below. Give Mauger a whipping and send him forward."

She hesitated a moment, glanced at Willis.

"If you'll come down to the cabin with me," she said, "I'll give you the irons."

Willis stepped toward her; and with no further glance for Brander, she turned and went below.

They had been two weeks hard and fast on the sand; there was another week ahead of them. An easterly storm would cement them into the sand beyond any help; and the men looked for it daily. For the rest, there was little to do. The Sally was in shape again, ready to be off if she had the chance.

The men, with sullen faces, loafed about the fore deck and whispered man to man. Dan'l went among them now and then and talked much with Roy, and some with the others. Roy was elated in those days; the boy went about with shining eyes and

triumphant lips. Every other face among the crew was morose save his.

Dan'l was not morose. He was overly cheerful. He spoke in louder tones than was his custom, and there was no caustic bite to his tongue; but his eyes were narrower and more furtive. Once or twice Faith saw him turn away from a word with some one of the crew and catch sight of her watching him, and flush uneasily.

But Faith scarce heeded; she was sick with sorrow and sick with anxiety. The tides were rising higher every day; she watched for the hour when they should lift the Sally. And at each high tide she made the men stand to the capstan-bars and work desperately to fetch the ship free.

The day before the night of the full of the moon she had them get out casks from the main hold, lower them overside, and raft them there; cask after cask, as many as the men could handle during the day, so that the Sally was lighter at night-fall than she had been for months.

The tide was at the flood that night at nine o'clock; and for half an hour before, and for a full hour after the waters had begun to ebb, every man of them strove to stir the Sally. They strove fruitlessly; for the ship seemed fast-bedded in the sand, beyond moving.

At ten o'clock Faith left the deck and went sick-heartedly below.

At half past ten Dan'l knocked on the door of the after cabin, and she bade him come in. He opened the door, shut it behind him, looked at her with his cap in his hands for a space, then sat down on the seat beside the desk where she was sitting.

"Eh, Faith!" he said. "We're stuck."

For a moment she did not answer; then she lifted her head and looked at him.

"There's a high tide to-morrow night; times it's a bit higher than it is on the flood," she said. "We'll get more casks out of the hold to-morrow, and at night we'll float her."

Dan'l shook his head slowly.

"You're brave, Faith, and strong; but the sea's stronger. I've sailed long enough to know."

"The Sally Sims has got to come free," she said steadfastly. "It's in my mind to get her off if we have to take every stick out of her and lift her off ourselves!"

"If we could do it, I'd be with you," he told her. "But we can't, Faith."

"We will," she said.

He smiled, studied her for a moment, then leaned toward her, resting his hands on the desk.

"Faith," he said softly, "you're a wonderful, brave woman!"

She looked at him with a weary flicker of lips and eyes that might have passed for a smile.

"It's not that I'm brave, Dan'l," she said. "It's just that I'll not let Noll Wing's ship rot here when it should be bound home to the other side of the world."

"Noll Wing's ship?" he echoed. "Eh, Faith, but Noll Wing is dead and gone."

She nodded.

"He's dead and gone, Faith," he repeated swiftly. "He's dead and gone; and but for Noll Wing, Faith, you'd have loved me, three years ago."

She looked up then and studied him, and she said softly:

"You'll mind, Dan'l, that Noll Wing is not but three weeks dead."

"Three weeks dead!" he cried. "Have I not seen? He's been a dead man this year past—a dead man that walked and talked and swore, but dead this year past. You've been a widow for a year, Faith!"

She shook her head.

"So long as the Sally lies here on the sand," she said, "I'm not Noll Wing's widow; I'm his wife. It was his job to bring her home; and so it is my job, too. And will be till she's fast to the wharf at home."

"Then you'll die his wife, Faith; for the Sally 'll never stir from here!"

"If she never does," said Faith, "I'll die Noll Wing's wife, as you say."

"What was Noll Wing that you should cling to him so, Faith?" he cried.

"He was the man I loved," she said.

His face blackened, and his fist banged the desk.

"Aye; and but for him you'd have loved me!" he replied bitterly.

"I never told you that, Dan'l."

"But 'twas true. I could see. You'd have loved me, Faith!"

"Dan'l," she said slowly, "I'm in no mind to talk so much of love to-night."

The man sat back in silence for a space, not looking at her; nor did she look at him. In the end, however, he shaped his words afresh.

"Faith," he said softly, "we were boy and girl together, you and I. We grew up together, played together. I loved you be-

fore you were a woman—before you ever saw Noll Wing. Can you remember?"

He was striving with all his might to win her; and Faith said gently:

"Yes, Dan'l. I remember."

"When I sailed away, last cruise but one, you kissed me, Faith. Do you mind?"

She looked at him in honest surprise.

"I kissed you, Dan'l?"

"Yes—on the forehead."

She shook her head.

"I don't remember at all."

If he had been wholly wise he would have known that her not remembering was the end of him; but Dan'l in that moment was not even a little wise. He was playing for a big stake. Faith was never so lovely in his eyes, and there was desperation in him. He was blind with the heat of his own desire.

"You do remember!" he cried. "You're pretending, Faith. You could not forget. You loved me then; and, Faith, you love me now!"

She shook her head.

"You do not know; you're not listening to your heart. I know more of your heart than you know, Faith."

"No, no, no, Dan'l," she said insistently.

He flamed at her in sudden fury.

"If it's not me, it's Brander. Him that you—"

"Brander?" she cried in a passion.

"Brander? The thief that's lying now in the irons I put upon him? Him? Him you say I love?"

The very force of her anger should have told him the truth; but he was so blind that it served only to rejoice him.

"I knew it!" he cried. "I knew it. So you love me, Faith!"

"Must a woman always be loving?" she demanded wearily.

"Aye, Faith. It's the nature of them always to be loving—some one. With you, Faith, it's me. Listen and see!"

"Dan'l," she said steadily, "what's the end of all this? What's the end of it all? What would you have me do?"

"Love me," he told her.

"What else?"

"See the truth," he said. "Understand that the Sally is lost—fast aground here to rot her bones away. See that it's hopeless and wild to stick by her. We'll get out the boats. You and I and Roy and a man or two will take one; the others may have the other craft. It's not fifty miles to—"

"Leave the Sally?" she demanded.

"Yes."

"I'll not talk with you, Dan'l. I'll never do that!"

"There's the ambergris," he reminded her. "We'll take that. It will recompense old Jonathan for his Sally and her oil."

"No!"

Her word was so sharp that it checked him. He was up on his feet, bending above her, pouring out his pleadings; but she threw him into silence with that last word. The red flush of passion in his face blackened to something worse, and his tongue thickened with the heat in him. He bent a little nearer, while her eyes met his steadily; and his hands dropped and gripped her arms above the elbows. She came to her feet, facing him.

"Dan'l!" she said warningly.

"If you'll not go because you will, you'll go because you must," he told her huskily and harshly. "You'll whine at my feet afore I'm through with you. You'll beg me to marry you in the end!"

If she had been able to hold still, to hold his eyes with hers, she might have mastered him even then; for in any match of courage against courage, she was the stronger. But the horror of him overwhelmed her; she tried to wrench away. Her struggle fired him. In a battle of strength and strength she had no chance. He swung her against his chest, and she flung her head back that her lips might escape him. He laughed. His lips were dry and twitching as she fought to be away from him. He held her for an instant, held her striving body against his own to revel in its struggles.

He had her thus in his arms, forcing her back, crushing her, when the door flung open and Roy Kilcup stood there. The boy cried in desperate warning:

"Dan'l, Brander is—"

Then he comprehended that which he saw. He screamed with the fury of an animal, and flung himself at Dan'l, tearing at the man with his strength of a boy.

XXXI

DAN'L had laid his plans well; he had felt sure of success; but he had not counted on trouble with Faith. He thought, after their failure to float the Sally, she would be crushed and ready to fall into his arms; ready at least to yield to his advice and come away and leave the ship where it lay.

After that Dan'l counted on separating the crew by losing the other boats. The ambergris would be in his; he would master the men with him. Faith and the treasure would be his.

Brander was to stay in the Sally, ironed in the after 'tween-decks. Dan'l thought Brander was destroyed by the evidence of his thieving; he no longer feared the man.

Not all the crew would go with him when he left the ship. Old Tichel had refused.

"I've waited all my days to be cap'n of a craft," Tichel declared. "With you gone, I'm master o' the Sally. I'll stay and get the feeling of it."

And Dan'l was willing to let him stay. Willis Cox agreed to do as Faith decided. Long Jim, the harpooner, was loyal to Tichel. Loum, Dan'l did not trust. The man might stay with Brander if he chose.

But Dan'l had on his side Kellick, the steward; and Yella Boy, and Silva, and four seamen from forward, and seven of those who had shipped as green hands. Silva hated Brander no less than Dan'l, for Brander had taken the mate's berth that Silva had hoped to get. Silva was Dan'l's right-hand man in his plans. And Roy, Dan'l thought, was his own to do with as he chose.

Mauger got some whisperings of all this, of course, in the fo'c's'le. There was no effort to keep it secret from him; no effort to keep the matter secret at all. Dan'l had said openly that if the Sally did not float he was for deserting her; those might come with him who chose. Save Mauger, there were none openly against him. Tichel would stay, Willis waited on Faith's word, but the rest held off and swung neither one way nor another.

All of which Mauger, with infinite stealth, told Brander, sneaking down into the after 'tween-decks at peril of his skin, night after night. Brander, fast-ironed there, and taking his calamities very philosophically, praised the little man.

"Keep your eyes open," he said. "Bring me any word you get. Warn me in full time. And—find me a good, keen file."

Mauger fetched the file, pilfering it from the tool-chest of Eph Hitch, the cooper. Brander worked patiently at his bonds, submitting without protest to his captivity.

That night of the full moon, after they had failed to float the Sally, Dan'l called Silva and bade him prepare the boats.

"Get food and water into them," he said. "Take plenty. Make them ready. Tell the rest of the men to lower if they've a mind. I'm for leaving."

Silva grinned his understanding. He asked a question.

"I'm going down now to convince her," Dan'l said. "She'll come, no fear."

He went below and left Silva to prepare the boats. Old Tichel was on deck, but Willis had gone below. Tichel did not molest Silva. Discipline had evaporated on the Sally; it was every man for himself. Those who were for leaving ship were hotly impatient; and one boatful of men lowered and drew slowly away toward the mouth of the cove where the Sally lay.

There was no wind; the sea was glassy; and their oars stirred the water into sparkling showers like jewels. Kellick, Yella Boy, and four seamen were in that boat. Five of the green hands and Tinch, the cook, caught the infection, dumped food and water into another craft, and followed.

Silva got his boat overside. He had with him two men—men of his choosing, who had signed as green hands, but were stalwarts now. He made sure the boat was ready, then stood in her, holding with one hand to the rail, and waiting for Dan'l to come with Faith. Roy, who would also go in this boat, was on the after deck.

The men in the two craft that had already left the ship were lying on their oars half a mile away, watching the Sally. In all their minds was the thought of the ambergris. They had no notion of leaving that behind; and they did not mean to be tricked out of their share in it. Silva could see the boats idly drifting.

Mauger slipped down to Brander and told him what was afoot.

"Two boats gone a'ready," he said. "Silva waiting for Mr. Tobey now."

"Where's she?" Brander asked.

"In the cabin. Mr. Tobey went to her. He've not come up yet."

Brander considered.

"Fetch a handspike," he said. "It's time I took a hand."

When Mauger had crawled on deck and returned with what Brander wanted, he pried open the filed irons, stood up, and shook himself to ease the ache of his muscles.

"Now," he said, "let's go see!"

He reached the deck, Mauger at his heels, and started aft. Silva, head above the

rail, marked Brander's movements, and signed his two men to follow, and swung up aboard the Sally. Roy saw Brander and leaped down to the cabin to warn Dan'l. Brander followed him. Mauger, at Brander's back, heard Silva's rushing feet and turned to meet his charge.

Brander was at the foot of the companion-ladder when Roy threw open the after cabin door; he saw, as Roy saw, Dan'l gripping Faith so brutally. He heard Roy's cry; then Roy leaped to grapple Dan'l.

Roy's eyes were opened in that moment; he had become a man. Dan'l had told him they would leave the ship, had told him nothing more. The boy had been full of anger against his sister, and Dan'l counted on this, and feared no trouble from him. He forgot that the anger of a boy is not overstrong. It was swept away now in a lightning flash of understanding. When Roy saw Faith in Dan'l's arms, helplessly fighting against his kisses, he leaped to protect her as if there had never been harsh words between them.

The boy gripped Dan'l from behind. For an instant more Dan'l clung to Faith. His encircling arm tightened about her, so that she thought her ribs would crack. When he flung her away she was breathless and sick to nausea, and she fell on the floor and lay there, gasping for breath. Dan'l flung her away and swung on Roy.

"You young fool!" he swore. "I'll kill you!"

Roy was helpless before him. Dan'l held him by the throat, his fingers sinking home. Roy beat and tore at the man for a space; then his face blackened and his eyes bulged, and Dan'l flung him away.

Brander might have helped him but for the fact that three men dropped on him from the companion-hatch and bore him, smothering, to the deck. The three were Silva and his allies. Silva had a knife; and Mauger had felt it on the deck above. The one-eyed man lay there now, twisting and clutching at a gash in his side.

Silva was first down on Brander; and he struck at Brander's neck as he leaped. But Brander had time to dodge to one side, so that Silva hit him on the hip and bore him down. Then the other two were upon them.

This sudden tumult in the cabin rang through the Sally. The night was still; the noise could be heard even by the boats that drifted half a mile away. Its abrupt

outbreak was unsettling; it jangled taut nerves. Long Jim, Loum, Eph Hitch, and the two remaining seamen lost courage, raced for a boat, dropped it to the water, and pulled off to see what was to come. Tichel, who was on deck, ran to try to stop them; but Loum struck out at him blindly, and threw the old mate off his balance for an instant that was long enough to let them get away.

The desertion of these last men left on the Sally only the four officers, Roy, Mauger, Silva, and Silva's two men. Faith was still helpless, so was Roy. Mauger had dragged himself upright against the bulwarks and stripped up his shirt to investigate his wound. It was bleeding profusely, but he found that he could breathe without difficulty, and told himself shrewdly that he would come out all right.

Of men able to fight aboard the Sally, there were left Dan'l, Silva, and the two seamen on one side, against Brander, Tichel, and Cox. The attitude of Tichel and Cox was in some sort uncertain; but the problem was quickly settled.

Dan'l, dropping Faith and flinging Roy aside, had charged into the main cabin to finish Brander; but Brander was so inextricably involved in his struggle with his three antagonists that Dan'l got no immediate chance at him. He was shifting around the twisting tangle of men, watching, when Willis came out of his cabin in a single leap.

Willis had been asleep; he was in shirt and trousers, his belt tight-girthed. He stared stupidly, not understanding.

Dan'l, balked of his chance at Brander, took Willis for fair game. If he thought at all, it was to remember that Willis was loyal to Faith. He attacked before Willis was fully awake, and bore the other man back into the cabin from which he had come.

Dan'l bent Willis against the bunks, so that for an instant it seemed the man's back would snap; but desperation gave Willis the strength to fling himself away. They whirled into the cabin, still fighting. Dan'l was drunk with his own rage by now. He had thrown himself into a debauch of battle; and he proved this night that he could fight when he chose.

He rocked Willis at last with a left-hand blow in the ribs, so that the younger man dropped his arms to hug his bruised body; and Dan'l drove home his fist to the other's

jaw. The blow smacked loudly, and Willis fell without a sound.

If old Tichel had come down the companion-ladder a minute sooner he might have saved Willis, and he and Willis between them could have overcome Dan'l. But he was too late for that; he was in time to see Willis fall; and before he could speak, Dan'l Tobey had attacked him.

Dan'l was pure maniac now; he did not stop to ask whether Tichel was friend or foe. Tichel, old man though he was, was never one to refuse a battle. He met Dan'l's charge with the tigerish venom that characterized him in his rages; he leaped and was fairly in the air when Dan'l struck him. But Dan'l's greater weight and the impetus of his charge were too much for old Tichel. In the flash of a second Dan'l had him by the throat, down, banging his head against the floor till the skin of his scalp was crushed and the blood flowed, and Tichel at last lay still.

Dan'l got up, choking for breath, his chin down on his chest. There was blood on him; his shirt was torn; his hair was wild. The mild, round face of the man was distorted by wrinkles of passion. His lip was bruised by a blow, and it puffed out in a surly, drunken way. He stood there, tottering, looking with blinking eyes at the heap of men fighting at one side of the cabin.

Brander was in that heap somewhere. It was still less than thirty seconds since Dan'l had struck down Willis. Dan'l stepped unsteadily toward the heap of men, peered down at them, and laid hands on them to pull them away. They were too closely intertwined.

He backed off and looked around for a weapon. In a corner of the cabin he saw something that might serve. It was the head of a killing-lance—a bar of metal three or four feet long, flattened at one end like the blade of a putty-knife, and ground to the keenest edge. For use, it would be mounted on a staff; but there was no staff in it now. He picked the thing up, balanced it in his hands, and walked gingerly back toward the struggling knot of men.

When Brander dropped down into the cabin, and through the open door saw Faith in Dan'l's arms, he was paralyzed for an instant. Then, as rage surged up in him, he sensed the danger above him, and dodged to one side as Silva leaped down from the

deck. Silva struck against Brander's hip, his knife slitting the air. Brander was thrown headlong, and Silva flung after him. Brander rolled on his back, catching Silva in the stomach with both feet, as the other two men dropped across his body.

He had put little force into his kick at Silva, so that the man was unhurt. Brander gripped one of the men who had fallen on him, and whirled him under. At the same time the other man attached himself to Brander's back, his right arm about Brander's neck to choke him. Brander wedged his chin down and gripped this arm between his chin and his breast, holding it off a little from his throat. Then Silva came at him from the left side, and Brander's left hand flung out and gripped Silva's knife-wrist.

Brander was past the first flush of anger; he was cool now as he was always cool in danger. Save Silva, the men against him were unarmed. At any rate, neither made any effort to use a weapon. Therefore Brander flung the one man out of his arms, and gave his attention to Silva.

He was just in time. Silva had shifted the knife to his other hand. Brander grappled for it, and the blade slid along his fingers, barely scratching them. Then he had the hand that held it; and he dragged it down and wrenched it over, and the fingers opened and the knife fell.

Brander groped for it, Silva swarming over him. He got the knife, but knew he could not use it, so he threw it with the half of his arm which was free. Crushed down by the men atop him, he saw that it slid across the floor and flew into the after cabin.

Brander had not seen Dan'l when the man came first to crouch above them. Dan'l was at Willis when Brander threw the knife. That weapon being gone, Brander turned his attention to the man who had his throat. He worked as coolly as if this man were his only antagonist. While he held off the others with his left hand and his knees, his right hand went up over his shoulder and found the face of the man who choked him. This groping hand of his came down against the man's face from above. His palm rested against the cheek of his antagonist; his thumb against the chin. His fingers groped under the other's jaw-bone and clinched around it, biting far up into the soft flesh at the bottom of the mouth. He got a grip on this bone that would hold; and the man

screamed, and Brander jerked him up and over his shoulder. The man slid helplessly, tearing at Brander's clenched fingers.

Brander, at this time, was sitting up, with Silva at his left, arms gripping, fists striking, and the other man at the right. The man whose jaw he held came down in Brander's lap. He brought his right knee up with all his force against the other's head, and the man became a dead weight across his legs. Brander wriggled free of him. He thought calmly that one of the three was gone and only two remained, and turned his attention to the others.

He had been forced to let them have their will of him for the seconds required to deal with the man who had choked him. They had him down now on his back on the cabin floor—one on either side of him. He got a left-hand grip on the seaman; he set his right hand on Silva's arm, and his fingers clenched on Silva's biceps. He flung them off a little, freeing himself so that he might have fought to his feet.

But when he thrust these two back thus, to right and left, and started to sit up, he saw Dan'l Tobey above him—Dan'l, with an insane light in his eyes, and the whaling-lance poised in a thrusting position. The heavy weapon flickered downward like a shaft of light.

Brander wrenched with all his strength at Silva; he swung Silva up and over his own body just in time to intercept the lance. It slid in between Silva's ribs, an inch from the backbone, and pierced him through to the sternum. It struck obliquely and cut half-way into the mingled cartilage and bone. Then the soft iron of the shaft "elbowed" at right angles, and Dan'l had to twist and fight to pull it free.

Silva, of course, was dead. Brander flung the corpse aside, rolling after it to be on his feet before Dan'l should strike again. But the remaining seaman was in his path; they clinched, straining breast to breast.

Dan'l had had no chance to straighten the lance; it was bent at right angles in the middle. When Brander and the seaman rolled on the floor, Dan'l lifted the weapon to bring it down like a hoe on Brander's back. The struggling men rolled away; the blade struck and stuck in the planking of the floor.

Brander got his man's throat and crushed it, so that the man lay still. Dan'l was tugging to get the blade free of the wood.

Then Faith appeared in the doorway of the after cabin. She was weak and sick and trembling; she gripped the door-post with her left hand. With her right she lifted a revolver.

"Dan'l," she cried, "stop!"

His back was turned toward her; but at her word he whirled, saw her, and sprang toward her, roaring. Brander was too far away to come between. Faith waited till Dan'l was within six feet of her; then she lowered her weapon's muzzle and shot him through the knee. He fell on his face at her feet, utterly disabled, and the senses went out of him.

As the echoes of the shot died in that narrow space, a great quiet settled down upon the Sally Sims.

XXXII

WHAT shadows remained, Roy was able to clear away—Roy, who had hated both Brander and Faith, yet in whom lived a strain of true blood that could not but answer to the good in these two in the end. The evil in Dan'l had been writ in his face for any man to see, when Roy found him clutching Faith; and Roy was not blind.

The boy abased himself; he was pitifully ashamed. Still hoarse from the choking Dan'l had given him, he told how he had stolen the whisky at the man's bidding—a little at first, a ten-gallon keg in the end. He told how he had himself filled the jug in Brander's boat with the liquor, and had hidden a bottle in Mauger's bunk, and had lied to old Tichel in the matter. He told the whole tale, and made his peace with them, while Faith and Brander watched each other over the boy's sobbing head with eloquent eyes.

For the rest—Silva was dead, and they buried him in the sand of the beach. Mauger had a shallow knife-slit along his ribs; Willis Cox had a broken jaw. The others had suffered nothing worse than bruises, save only Dan'l Tobey. Dan'l's knee was smashed and splintered, and he lay in a stupor in the cabin, Willis watching beside him.

Those who had fled to the boats came shamedly back at last. Faith and Brander met them at the rail, and Faith spoke to them. They had done wrong, she told them, but there was a chance of wiping out the score by bending to the toil she set them. They were already sick of adventuring; they swarmed aboard like homesick

boys. She and Brander told them what to do, and drove them to it.

Before that day was gone they had half her load out of the Sally; and at full tide that night, with every hand tugging at a line or breasting a capstan-bar, they hauled her off. She slid an inch, two inches, four. She moved a foot, three feet. They freed her by sheer power of their determination that she must come free. They dragged her full ten feet before the suction of the sand beneath her keel began to slack, and ten feet more before she floated free. Then the boats lowered, and towed her safe off shore, and anchored her there.

After that it took three days to get the casks inboard again and stowed below. In those three days Dan'l Tobey passed from suffering to delirium. Brander had tended his wound as best he could, but the bone was splintered and the flesh was shattered, and there came an hour when the flesh about the wound turned green and black.

"He's got to lose either leg or life," Brander told Faith.

She did not ask him if he were sure; she knew him well enough now never to doubt him again. But Dan'l, in an interval of lucidity, had heard.

"Take it off, Brander," he croaked. "Take it off. Get the ax, man!"

Brander bent over him.

"I'll do my best for you."

Dan'l grinned with the old jeer in his eyes.

"Aye, I've no doubt, Mr. Brander. Go at it, man!"

They had not so much as a vial of morphia to deaden the pain, and Dan'l slumped into delirium at the first stroke of the knife, which Brander had whetted to a razor keenness. His body twitched in the grip of Willis Cox and Loum. Faith helped Brander to tie the arteries; Roy stood by to give what aid he could.

When it was done Faith said the Sally would lie at anchor till Dan'l died or mended; and in two weeks Brander told her the man would live. She nodded.

"Then we'll go out and fill our casks," she said. "And then for home!"

Brander looked at her with shining eyes.

"Aye, fill our casks," he agreed, as if it were the most natural thing in the world to stick to that task till it was done.

They put to sea.

Dan'l was going to live; but the man was broken. He could not quit his bunk

through the months of the homeward cruise; he was wasted by the fury of his own passions, by the shock of his crippling injury. He had aged; there was no longer any strength in the man. So old Tichel came into his own at last; he became the titular master of the ship, and Faith was content to let him hold the reins, so long as he did as she desired.

Willis Cox yielded precedence to Brander; Brander was mate. When they sighted whales all three of them lowered while Faith kept ship. Their work had been nearly done before Noll died; they lacked less than a dozen whales to fill. Young Roy, to his vast content, was allowed to take out a boat and kill one of that last dozen, while Brander, in his boat, lay watchfully by.

Came a day when the trying-out was done that Brander went to Faith.

"We're bung up," he said. "The last cask's sweating full."

Faith nodded happily, and swung to Mr. Tichel.

"Then let's for home," she said.

For the rest, the story tells itself. They hauled in to the nearest island port, where they recooped the water-casks and took on wood and water for the five months' homeward way. They stocked with potatoes and vegetables. The crow's-nests came down, and to-gallantmasts were set to carry canvas on the passage. The gear was stripped from the whale-boats and stowed away, and two of the boats were lashed atop the boat-house with the spars. The rigging had a touch of tar, the hull and spars took a lick of paint, the woodwork shone with scraping.

So, to sea. The first day out saw the dismantling of the try-works; and broken bricks flew overside for half that day, all hands joining in the sport of it. Then a clean deck, and a stout northwest wind behind them, and the long easterly stretch to the Horn was begun.

That homeward cruise was a pleasant time for Faith and Brander. They were much together, speaking little, speaking not at all of themselves; save once when Faith said, smiling at him shyly:

"I knew you hadn't done it, even when I told them to put you in irons."

He nodded.

"I knew you knew."

They both understood; their eyes said what their lips were not yet ready to say.

There was a reticence upon them. Faith, on the deck of her husband's ship, still felt the shadow of Noll Wing in her life.

Brander, too, felt its presence. It made neither of them unhappy; they respected it. Faith was never ashamed of Noll. He had been a man. She had loved him; she was proud that he had loved her.

Day by day they were together, on deck or below, while the winds worked for them and the stars in their courses watched over them. Through the chill of southern waters they rounded the cape. Tichel, looking back at it, waved his hand in valedictory.

"What are you thinking, Mr. Tichel?" Faith asked.

"Saying good-by to old Cape Stiff there," he chuckled. "I'll not come this way again."

"Yes, you will," she told him. "You're captain of your own ship now; and will be next cruise."

He shook his head.

"I know when I'm well off, young lady," he persisted. "Old Tichel's ready to stick ashore now."

She left him staring back across the dull, cold sea. He stood there stiffly till the night came down upon the waters.

After that they struck warmer winds, with a pleasant ocean all about, the scud of spray sweet upon their cheeks, and the Sally fat with oil beneath their feet. It was a happy time, when Faith and Brander, with never a word and never a touch of hands, grew close as man and woman can grow.

Never a cloud in the skies from their last kill to the day they picked up the tug that shunted them alongside their wharf at home.

There are many things that never get into the log. Faith had no vengeful heart toward Dan'l; the man had reaped what he sowed. With the Sally, Noll Wing's ship, safe home again, she was willing to forget what had passed. She told Dan'l so. Silva was dead; the others had been but instruments. The matter was done.

Dan'l, possessed by a creeping apathy, nodded his thanks to her and turned away his head. The man was dying where he lay; he would not long survive.

Old Jem Kilcup was at the wharf to hug Faith against his broad chest—an older Jem than when she went away, but a glad

Jem to see her home again. Jonathan Felt was with him, asking anxiously for Noll. When Faith told them Noll was gone, old Jonathan fell sorrowfully silent. The whole town would mourn Noll; he had been one of its heroes.

"He's dead, sir," Faith said proudly; "but this was his fattest cruise. Noll Wing never brought home a better cargo than he's sent now."

"You're full?" asked Jonathan.

"Aye, every cask, and more," said Faith.

She told him of the ambergris. She gave Brander so much credit for that, and for other things, that Jonathan hooked his arm in that of the young man, and walked with him thus when they all went to the office to hear Cap'n Tichel make his report.

Jem sat there listening, with proud eyes on Faith, while Tichel told the story; and Faith listened and looked now and then at Brander, where he stood in the shadows by the window. In the end Tichel said straightforwardly that he was content with what life had brought him, that he was through with the sea. But he pointed toward Brander.

"There's a man that 'll beat Noll Wing's best for you," he said.

Jonathan got up, a spry old figure, and crossed to grip Brander by the hand.

"You'll take out a ship o' mine?" he asked.

Brander hesitated, and his eyes crossed to meet Faith's, as if to ask permission. Faith nodded faintly.

"Yes, sir, if you like," he said.

"I do like," said Jonathan briskly. "That's settled then!"

Tichel and Willis went back to the ship. Old Jem and Jonathan and Faith and Brander talked together a little longer. And it came to pass that Faith and Brander drew apart by the window, whence they could look down the length of the littered wharf to the Sally. They stood with shoulders touching, looking at the ship, thinking many things.

After a time he forgot the ship and turned to her, and she lifted to his eyes her eyes that offered everything. He said a little huskily:

"I've much to say to you that's never been said. Will you let me come to your home this night for the saying?"

She smiled gloriously.

"Do come!" she said.